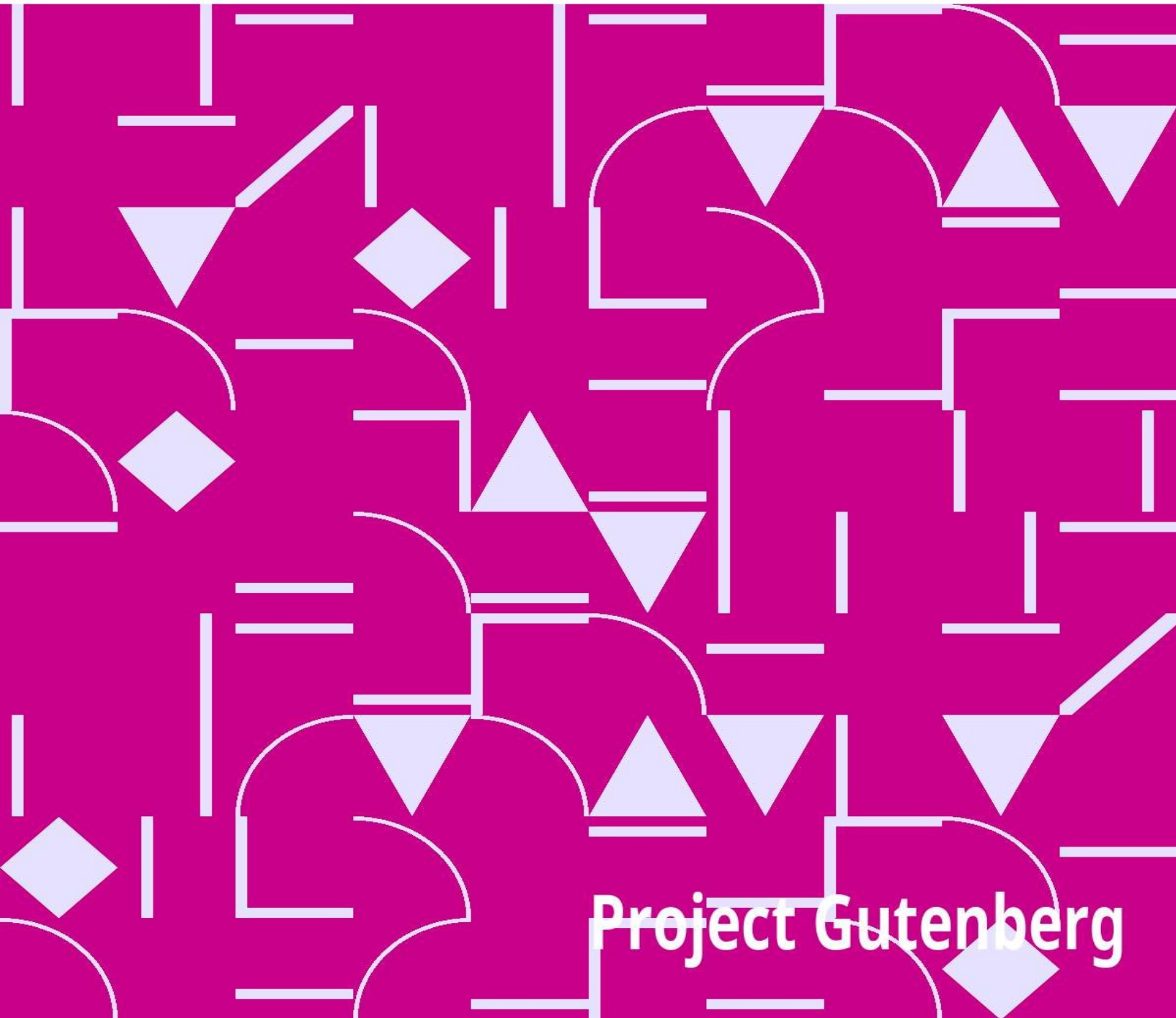
The Heroic Enthusiasts (Gli Eroici Furori) Part the First

An Ethical Poem

Giordano Bruno



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THE

HEROIC ENTHUSIASTS

(*GLI EROICI FURORI*)

An Ethical poem

BY GIORDANO BRUNO

PART THE FIRST

TRANSLATED BY

L. WILLIAMS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, COMPILED CHIEFLY FROM
DAVID LEVI'S GIORDANO BRUNO O LA RELIGIONE DEL PENSIERO

LONDON
GEORGE REDWAY
YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN
1887

INTRODUCTION.
First Dialogue.
Second Dialogue.
Third Dialogue.
Fourth Dialogue.
Fifth Dialogue.

PREFACE.

When this Translation was begun, more than two years ago, for my own pleasure, in leisure hours, I had no knowledge of the difficulty I should find in the work, nor any thought of ever having it printed; but as "Gli Eroici Furori" of Giordano Bruno has never appeared in English, I decided to publish that portion of it which I have finished.

I wish to thank those friends who have so kindly looked over my work from time to time, and given me their help in the choice of words and phrases. I must,

moreover, confess that I am keenly alive to the shortcomings and defects of this Translation.

I have used the word "Enthusiasts" in the title, rather than "Enthusiasms," because it seemed to me more appropriate.

L. W.

FOLKESTONE, *September 1887*.

ERRATA

Page 3, line 10, *for* "also mother" *read* "also my mother."
Page 47, line 9, *for* "poisons" *read* "poison."

INTRODUCTION.

Nola, a city founded by the Chalcidian Greeks, at a short distance from Naples and from Vesuvius, was the birth-place of Giordano Bruno. It is described by David Levi as a city which from ancient times had always been consecrated to science and letters. From the time of the Romans to that of the Barbarians and of the Middle Ages, Nola was conspicuous for culture and refinement, and its inhabitants were in all times remarkable for their courteous manners, for valour, and for keenness of perception. They were, moreover, distinguished by their love for and study of philosophy; so that this city was ever a favourite dwelling-place for the choice spirits of the Renaissance. It may also be asserted that Nola was the only city of Magna Græcia which, in spite of the persecutions of Pagan emperors and Christian princes and clergy, always preserved the philosophical traditions of the Pythagoreans, and never was the sacred fire on the altar of Vesta suffered to become entirely extinct. Such was the intellectual and moral atmosphere in which Bruno passed his childhood. His paternal home was situated at the foot of Mount Cicada, celebrated for its fruitful soil. From early youth his pleasure was to pass the night out on the mountain, now watching the stars, now contemplating the arid, desolate sides of Vesuvius. He tells how, in recalling those days—the only peaceful ones of his life—he used to think, as he looked up at the infinite expanse of heaven and the confines of the horizon, with the towering volcano, that this must be the ultimate end of the earth, and it appeared as if neither tree nor grass refreshed the dreary space which stretched out to the foot of the bare smoky mountain. When, grown older, he came nearer to it, and saw the mountain so different from what it had appeared, and the intervening space that, seen from afar, had looked so bare and sterile, all covered with fruit-trees and enriched with vineyards, he began to see how illusory the judgment of the senses may be; and the first doubt was planted in his young soul as he perceived that, while the mind may grasp Nature in her grandeur and majesty, the work of the sage must be to examine her in detail, and penetrate to the cause of things. When he appeared before the tribunal of the Holy Office at Venice, being asked to declare who and what he was, he said: "My name is Giordano, of the family of Bruno, of the city of Nola, twelve miles from Naples. There was I born and brought up. My profession has been and is that of letters, and of all the sciences. My father's name was Giovanni, and my mother was Francesca Savolini; and my father was a soldier. He is dead, and also mother. I

am forty-four years old, having been born in 1548." He always regarded Nola with patriotic pride, and he received his first instruction in his father's house and in the public schools. Of a sad disposition, and gifted with a most lively imagination, he was from his earliest years given to meditation and to poetry. The early years of Bruno's life were times of agitation and misfortune, and not propitious to study. The Neapolitan provinces were disturbed by constant earthquakes, and devastated by pestilence and famine. The Turks fought, and ravaged the country, and made slaves of the inhabitants; the neighbouring provinces were still more harassed by hordes of bandits and outlaws, who invested Calabria, led by a terrible chief called Marcone. The Inquisition stood prepared to light its fires and slaughter the heretic. The Waldensians, who had lately been driven out of Piedmont, and had sought a shelter in the Calabrian territory, were hunted down and given over to the executioner.

The convent was the only refuge from violence, and Bruno, either from religious enthusiasm, or in order to be able to devote himself to study, became a friar at the age of fifteen. There, in the quiet cloister of the convent of St. Dominic at Naples, his mind was nourished and his intellect developed; the cloistral and monkish education failed to enslave his thought, and he emerged from this tutelage the boldest and least fettered of philosophers. Everything about this church and this convent, famous as having been the abode of Thomas Aquinas, was calculated to fire the enthusiasm of Bruno's soul; the leisure and quiet, far from inducing habits of indolence, or the sterile practices of asceticism, were stimulants to austere study, and to the fervour of mystical speculations. Here he passed nearly thirteen years of early manhood, until his intellect strengthened by study he began to long for independence of thought, and becoming, as he said himself, solicitous about the food of the soul and the culture of the mind, he found it irksome to go through automatically the daily vulgar routine of the convent; the pure flame of an elevated religious feeling being kindled in his soul, he tried to evade the vain exercises of the monks, the puerile gymnastics, and the adoration of so-called relics. His character was frank and open, and he was unable to hide his convictions; he put some of his doubts before his companions, and these hastened to refer them to the superiors; and thus was material found to institute a cause against him. It became known, that he had praised the methods used by the Arians or Unitarians in expounding their doctrines, adding that they refer all things to the ultimate cause, which is the Father: this, with other heretical propositions, being brought to the notice of the Holy Office, Bruno found himself in the position of being first observed and then threatened. He was warned of the danger that hung over him by some friends, and decided to quit

Naples. He fled from the convent, and took the road to Rome, and was there received in the monastery of the Minerva. A few days after his arrival in Rome he learned that instructions for his arrest had been forwarded from Naples; he tarried not, but got away secretly, throwing aside the monk's habiliments by the way. He wandered for some days about the Roman Campagna, his destitute condition proving a safeguard against the bands of brigands that infested those lands, until arriving near Civita Vecchia, he was taken on board a Genoese vessel, and carried to the Ligurian port, where he hoped to find a refuge from his enemies; but the city of Geneva was devastated by pestilence and civil war, and after a sojourn of a few days he pursued once more the road of exile. Seeking for a place wherein he might settle for a short time and hide from his pursuers, he stayed his steps at Noli, situated at a short distance from Savona, on the Riviera: this town, nestled in a little bay surrounded by high hills crowned by feudal castles and towers, was only accessible on the shore side, and offered a grateful retreat to our philosopher. At Noli, Bruno obtained permission of the magistracy to teach grammar to children, and thus secured the means of subsistence by the small remuneration he received; but this modest employment did not occupy him sufficiently, and he gathered round him a few gentlemen of the district, to whom he taught the science of the Sphere. Bruno also wrote a book upon the Sphere, which was lost. He expounded the system of Copernicus, and talked to his pupils with enthusiasm about the movement of the earth and of the plurality of worlds.

As in that same Liguria Columbus first divined another hemisphere outside the Pillars of Hercules, so Bruno discovered to those astonished minds the myriads of worlds which fill the immensity of space. Columbus was derided and banished by his fellow-citizens, and the fate of our philosopher was similar to his. In the humble schoolmaster who taught grammar to the children, the bishop, the clergy, and the nobles, who listened eagerly to his lectures on the Sphere, began to suspect the heretic and the innovator. After five months it behoved him to leave Noli; he took the road to Savona, crossed the Apennines, and arrived at Turin. In Turin at that time reigned the great Duke Emanuele Filiberto, a man of strong character—one of those men who know how to found a dynasty and to fix the destiny of a people; at that time, when Central and Southern Italy were languishing under home and foreign tyranny, he laid the foundations of the future Italy.

He was warrior, artist, mechanic, and scholar. Intrepid on the field of battle, he would retire from deeds of arms to the silence of his study, and cause the works of Aristotle to be read to him; he spoke all the European languages; he worked at

artillery, at models of fortresses, and at the smith's craft; he brought together around him, from all sides of Italy, artisans and scientists to promote industry, commerce, and science; he gathered together in Piedmont the most excellent compositors of Italy, and sanctioned a printer's company.

Bruno, attracted to Turin by the favour that was shown to letters and philosophy, hoped to get occupation as press reader; but it was precisely at that time that the Duke, instigated by France, was combating, with every kind of weapon, the Waldensian and Huguenot heresies, and had invited the Jesuits to Turin, offering them a substantial subsidy; so that on Bruno's arrival he found the place he had hoped for, as teacher in the university, occupied by his enemies, and he therefore moved on with little delay, and embarked for Venice.

Berti, in his Life of Bruno, remarks that when the latter sought refuge in Turin, Torquato Tasso, also driven by adverse fortune, arrived in the same place, and he notes the affinity between them—both so great, both subject to every species of misfortune and persecution in life, and destined to immortal honours after their death: the light of genius burned in them both, the fire of enthusiasm flamed in each alike, and on the forehead of each one was set the sign of sorrow and of pain.

Both Bruno and Tasso entered the cloister as boys: the one joined the Dominicans, the other the Jesuits; and in the souls of both might be discerned the impress of the Order to which they belonged. Both went forth from their native place longing to find a broader field of action and greater scope for their intellectual powers. The one left Naples carrying in his heart the Pagan and Christian traditions of the noble enterprises and the saintly heroism of Olympus and of Calvary, of Homer and the Fathers, of Plato and St. Ignatius; the other was filled with the philosophical thought of the primitive Italian and Pythagorean epochs, fecundated by his own conceptions and by the new age; philosopher and apostle of an idea, Bruno consecrated his life to the development of it in his writings and to the propagation of his principles in Europe by the fire of enthusiasm. The one surprised the world with the melody of his songs; being, as Dante says, the "dolce sirena che i marinari in mezzo al mare smaga," he lulled the anguish that lacerated Italy, and gilded the chains which bound her; the other tried to shake her; to recall her to life with the vigour of thought, with the force of reason, with the sacrifice of himself. The songs of Tasso were heard and sung from one end of Italy to the other, and the poet dwelt in palaces and received the caress and smile of princes; while Bruno, discoursing in the name of reason and of science, was rejected, persecuted, and scourged,

and only after three centuries of ingratitude, of calumny, and of forgetfulness, does his country show signs of appreciating him and of doing justice to his memory. In Tasso the poet predominates over the philosopher, in Bruno the philosopher predominates over and eclipses the poet. The first sacrifices thought to form; the second is careful only of the idea. Again, both are full of a conception of the Divine, but the God that the dying Tasso confessed is a god that is expected and comes not; while the god that Bruno proclaims he already finds within himself. Tasso dies in his bed in the cloister, uneasy as on a bed of thorns; Bruno, amidst the flames, stands out as on a pedestal, and dies serene and calm. We must now follow our fugitive to Venice.

At the time Giordano Bruno arrived in Venice that city was the most important typographical centre of Europe; the commerce in books extended through the Levant, Germany, and France, and the philosopher hoped that here he might find some means of subsistence. The plague at that time was devastating Venice, and in less than one year had claimed forty-two thousand victims; but Bruno felt no fear, and he took a lodging in that part of Venice called the Frezzeria, and was soon busy preparing for the press a work called "Segni del Tempo," hoping that the sale of it would bring a little money for daily needs. This work was lost, as were all those which he published in Italy, and which it was to the interest of Rome to destroy. Disappointed at not finding work to do in Venice, he next went to Padua, which was the intellectual centre of Europe, as Venice was the centre of printing and publishing; the most celebrated professors of that epoch were to be found in the University of Padua, but at the time of Bruno's sojourn there, Padua, like Venice, was ravaged by the plague; the university was closed, and the printing-house was not in operation. He remained there only a few days, lodging with some monks of the Order of St. Dominic, who, he relates, "persuaded me to wear the dress again, even though I would not profess the religion it implied, because they said it would aid me in my wayfaring to be thus attired; and so I got a white cloth robe, and I put on the hood which I had preserved when I left Rome." Thus habited he wandered for several months about the cities of Venetia and Lombardy; and although he contrived for a time to evade his persecutors, he finally decided to leave Italy, as it was repugnant to his disposition to live in forced dissimulation, and he felt that he could do no good either for himself or for his country, which was then overrun with Spaniards and scourged by petty tyrants; and with the lower orders sunk in ignorance, and the upper classes illiterate, uncultivated, and corrupt, the mission of Giordano Bruno was impossible. "Altiora Peto" was Bruno's motto, and to realize it he had gone forth with the pilgrim's staff in his hand, sometimes

covered with the cowl of the monk, at others wearing the simple habit of a schoolmaster, or, again, clothed with the doublet of the mechanic: he had found no resting-place—nowhere to lay his head, no one who could understand him, but always many ready to denounce him. He turned his back at last on his country, crossed the Alps on foot, and directed his steps towards Switzerland. He visited the universities in different towns of Switzerland, France, and Germany, and wherever he went he left behind him traces of his visit in some hurried writings. The only work of the Nolan, written in Italy, which has survived is "Il Candelajo," which was published in Paris. Levi, in his Life of Bruno, passes in review his various works; but it will suffice here to reproduce what he says of the "Eroici Furori," the first part of which I have translated, and to note his remarks upon the style of Bruno, which presents many difficulties to the translator on account of its formlessness. Goethe says of Bruno's writings: "Zu allgemeiner Betrachtung und Erhebung der Geistes eigneten sich die Schriften des Jordanus Brunous von Nola; aber freilich das gediegene Gold and Silber aus der Masse jener zo ungleich begabten Erzgänge auszuscheiden und unter den Hammer zu bringen erfordert fast mehr als menschliche Kräfte vermögen."

I believe that no translation of Giordano Bruno's works has ever been brought out in English, or, at any rate, no translation of the "Eroici Furori," and therefore I have had no help from previous renderings. I have, for the most part, followed the text as closely as possible, especially in the sonnets, which are frequently rendered line for line. Form is lacking in the original, and would, owing to the unusual and often fantastic clothing of the ideas, be difficult to apply in the translation. He seems to have written down his grand ideas hurriedly, and, as Levi says, probably intended to retouch the work before printing.

Following the order of Levi's Life of Bruno, we next find the fugitive at Geneva. He was hardly thirty-one years old when he quitted his country and crossed the Alps, and his first stopping-place was Chambery, where he was received in a convent of the Order of Predicatori; he proposed going on to Lyons, but being told by an Italian priest, whom he met there, that he was not likely to find countenance or support, either in the place he was in or in any other place, however far he might travel, he changed his course and made for Geneva.

The name of Giordano Bruno was not unknown to the Italian colony who had fled from papal persecution to this stronghold of religious reform. He went to lodge at an inn, and soon received visits from the Marchese di Vico Napoletano, Pietro Martire Vermigli, and other refugees, who welcomed him with affection, inquiring whether he intended to embrace the religion of Calvin, to which Bruno

replied that he did not intend to make profession of that religion, as he did not know of what kind it was, and he only desired to live in Geneva in freedom. He was then advised to doff the Dominican habit, which he still wore; this he was quite willing to do, only he had no money to buy other clothing, and was forced to have some made of the cloth of his monkish robes, and his new friends presented him with a sword and a hat; they also procured some work for him in correcting press errors.

The term of Bruno's sojourn in Geneva seems doubtful, and the precise nature of his employment when there is also uncertain; but his independent spirit brought him into dispute with the rigid Calvinists of that city, who preached and exacted a blind faith, absolute and compulsory. Bruno could not accept any of the existing positive religions; he professed the cult of philosophy and science, nor was his character of that mould that would have enabled him to hide his principles. It was made known to him that he must either adopt Calvinism or leave Geneva: he declined the former, and had no choice as to the latter; poor he had entered Geneva, and poor he left it, and now turned his steps towards France.

He reached Lyons, which was also at that time a city of refuge against religious persecutions, and he addressed himself to his compatriots, begging for work from the publishers, Aldo and Grifi; but not succeeding in gaining enough to enable him to subsist, after a few days he left, and went on his way to Toulouse, where there was a famous university; and having made acquaintance with several men of intellect, Bruno was invited to lecture on the Sphere, which he did, with various other subjects, for six months, when the chair of Philosophy becoming vacant, he took the degree of Doctor, and competed for it; and he continued for two years in that place, teaching the philosophy of Aristotle and of others. He took for the text of his lectures the treatise of Aristotle, "De Anima," and this gave him the opportunity of introducing and discussing the deepest questions—upon the Origin and Destiny of Humanity; The Soul, is it Matter or Spirit? Potentiality or Reality? Individual or Universal? Mortal or Eternal? Is Man alone gifted with Soul, or are all beings equally so? Bruno's system was in his mind complete and mature; he taught that everything in Nature has a soul, one universal mind, penetrates and moves all things; the world itself is a *sacrum animal*. Nothing is lost, but all transmutes and becomes. This vast field afforded him scope for teaching his doctrines upon the world, on the movement of the earth, and on the universal soul. The novelty and boldness of his opinions roused the animosity of the clergy against him, and after living two years and six

months at Toulouse, he felt it wise to retire, and leaving the capital of the Languedoc, he set his face towards Paris.

The two books—the fruit of his lectures—which he published in Toulouse, "De Anima" and "De Clavis Magis," were lost.

The title of Doctor, or as he said himself, "Maestro delle Arti," which Bruno had obtained at Toulouse, gave him the faculty of teaching publicly in Paris, and he says: "I went to Paris, where I set myself to read a most unusual lecture, in order to make myself known and to attract attention." He gave thirty lectures on the thirty Divine attributes, dividing and distributing them according to the method of St. Thomas Aquinas: these lectures excited much attention amongst the scholars of the Sorbonne, who went in crowds to hear him; and he introduced, as usual, his own ideas while apparently teaching the doctrines of St. Thomas. His extraordinary memory and his eloquence caused great astonishment; and the fame of Bruno reached the ears of King Henry III., who sent for him to the Court, and being filled with admiration of his learning, he offered him a substantial subsidy.

During his stay at Paris, although he was much at Court, he spent many hours in his study, writing the works that he afterwards published.

Philosophical questions were discussed at the Sorbonne with much freedom: Bruno showed himself no partisan of either the Platonic or the Peripatetic school; he was not exclusive either in philosophy or in religion; he did not favour the Huguenot faction more than the Catholic league; and precisely by reason of this independent attitude, which kept him free of the shackles of the sects, did he obtain the faculty of lecturing at the Sorbonne. Nor can we ascribe this aloofness to religious indifference, but to the fact that he sought for higher things and longed for nobler ones. The humiliating spectacle which the positive religions, both Catholic and Reformed, presented at that time—the hatreds, the civil wars, the assassinations which they instigated—had disgusted men of noble mould, and had turned them against these so-called religions; so that in Naples, in Tuscany, in Venice, in Switzerland, France, and England, there were to be found societies of philosophers, of free-thinkers, and politicians, who repudiated every positive religion and professed a pure Theism.

In the "Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante" he declares that he cannot ally himself either to the Catholic or the Lutheran Church, because he professes a more pure and complete faith than these—to wit, the love of humanity and the love of

wisdom; and Mocenigo, the disciple who ultimately betrayed and sold him to the Holy Office, declares in his deposition that Bruno sought to make himself the author of a new religion under the name of "Philosophy." He was not a man to conceal his ideas, and in the fervour of his improvisation he no doubt revealed what he was; some tumult resulted from this free speaking of Bruno's, and he was forced to discontinue his lectures at the Sorbonne.

Towards the end of the year 1583 the King became enthralled by religious enthusiasm, and nothing was talked of in Paris but the conversion of King Henry. This fact changed the aspect of affairs as far as Bruno was concerned; he judged it prudent to leave Paris, and he travelled to England.

The principal works published by Bruno during his stay in Paris are "Il Candelajo" and "Umbrae Idearum." The former, says Levi, is a work of criticism and of demolition; in this comedy he sets in groups the principal types of hypocrisy, stupidity, and rascality, and exhibiting them in their true colours, he lashes them with ridicule. In the "Umbrae Idearum" he initiates the work of reconstruction, giving colour to his thought and sketching his idea. The philosophy of Bruno is based upon that of Pythagoras, whose system penetrates the social and intellectual history of Italy, both ancient and modern. The method of Pythagoras is not confined, as most philosophies are, to pure metaphysical speculations, but connects these with scientific observations and social practice. Bruno having resuscitated these doctrines, stamps them with a wider scope, giving them a more positive direction; and he may with propriety be called the second Pythagoras. The primal idea of Pythagoras, which Bruno worked out to a more distinct development is this: numbers are the beginning of things; in other words numbers are the cause of the existence of material things; they are not final, but are always changing position and attributes; they are variable and relative. Beyond and above this mutability there must be the Immutable, the All, the One.

The Infinite must be one, as one is the absolute number; in the original One is contained all the numbers; in the One is contained all the elements of the Universe.

This abstract doctrine required to be elucidated and fixed. From a hypothesis to concentrate and reduce it to a reality was the great work of Bruno.

One is the perfect number; it is the primitive monad. As from the One proceeds the infinite series of numbers which again withdraw and are resolved into the

One; so from Substance, which is one, proceed the myriads of worlds; from the worlds proceed myriads of living creatures; and from the union of one with the diverse is generated the Universe. Hence the progression from ascent to descent, from spirit to that which we call matter; from the cause to the origin, and the process of metaphysics, which, from the finite world of sense rises to the intelligent, passing through the intermediate numbers of infinite substance to active being and cosmic reason.

From the absolute One, the sun of the sensible and intellectual world, millions of stars and suns are produced or developed. Each sun is the centre of as many worlds which are distributed in as many distinct series in an infinite number of concentric centres and systems. Each system is attracted, repelled, and moved by an infinite, internal passion, or attraction; each turns round its own centre, and moves in a spiral towards the centre of the whole, towards which centre they all tend with infinite passional ardour. For in this centre resides the sun of suns, the unity of unities, the temple, the altar of the universe, the sacred fire of Vesta, the vital principle of the universe.

That which occurs in the world of stars is reflected in the telluric world; everything has its centre, towards which it is attracted with fervour. All is thought, passion, and aspiration.

From this unity, which governs variety, from this movement of every world around its sun, of every sun around its centre sun—the sun of suns—which informs all with the rays of the spirit, with the light of thought—is generated that perfect harmony of colours, sounds, forms, which strike the sight and captivate and enthrall the intellect. That which in the heavens is harmony becomes, in the individual, morality, and in companies of human beings, law. That which is light in the spheres becomes intelligence and science in the world of the spirit and in humanity. We must study this harmony that rules the celestial worlds in order to deduce the laws which should govern civil bodies.

In the science of numbers dwells harmony, and therefore it behoves us to identify ourselves with this harmony, because from it is derived the harmonic law which draws men together into companies. Through the revolution of the worlds through space around their suns, from their order, their constancy and their measure, the mind comprehends the progress and conditions of men, and their duties towards each other. The Bible, the sacred book of man, is in the heavens; there does man find written the word of God.

Human souls are lights, distinct from the universal soul, which is diffused over all and penetrates everything. A purifying process guides them from one existence to another, from one form to another, from one world to another. The life of man is more than an experience or trial; it is an effort, a struggle to reproduce and represent upon earth some of that goodness, beauty, and truth which are diffused over the universe and constitute its harmony.

Long, slow, and full of opposition is this educational process of the soul. As the terraqueous globe becomes formed, changed, and perfected, little by little, through the cataclysms and convulsions which, by means of fire, flood, earthquake, and irruptions, transform the earth, so it is with humanity. Through struggle is man educated, fortified, and raised.

In the midst of social cataclysms and revolutions humanity has one guiding star, a beacon which shows its light above the storms and tempests, a mystical thread running through the labyrinth of history—namely, the religion of philosophy and of thought. The vulgar creeds would not, and have not dared to reveal the Truth in its purity and essence. They covered it with veils with allegories, with myths and mysteries, which they called sacred; they enshrouded thought with a double veil, and called it Revelation. Humanity, deceived by a seductive form, adored the veil, but did not lift itself up to the idea behind it; it saw the shadow, not the light.

But we must return to our wandering hero.

Bruno was about thirty-six years old when he left Paris and went to England. He was invited to visit the University of Oxford, and opened his lectures there with two subjects which, apparently diverse, are in reality intimately connected with each other—namely, on the Quadruple Sphere and on the Immortality of the Soul. Speaking of the immortality of the soul, he maintained that nothing in the universe is lost, everything changes and is transformed; therefore, soul and body, spirit and matter, are equally immortal. The body dissolves, and is transformed; the soul transmigrates, and, drawing round itself atom to atom, it reconstructs for itself a new body. The spirit that animates and moves all things is one; everything differentiates according to the different forms and bodies in which it operates. Hence, of animate things some are inferior by reason of the meanness of the organ in which they operate; others are superior through the richness of the same. Thus we see that Bruno anticipates the doctrine, proclaimed later by Goethe and by Darwin, of the transformation of species and of the organic unity of the animal world; and this alternation from segregation to aggregation, which

we call death and life, is no other than mutation of form.

After having criticised and scourged the religions of chimera, of ignorance, and hypocrisy, in "Lo Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante" and in "L'Asino Cillenico," the author, in "Gli Eroici Furori," lays down the basis for the religion of thought and of science. In place of the so-called Christian perfections (resignation, devotion, and ignorance), Bruno would put intelligence and the progress of the intellect in the world of physics, metaphysics, and morals; the true aim being illumination, the true morality the practice of justice, the true redemption the liberation of the soul from error, its elevation and union with God upon the wings of thought. This idea is developed in the work in question, which is dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney. After treating of the infinite universe, and contemplating the innumerable worlds in other works, he comes, in "Gli Eroici Furori," to the consideration of virtue in the individual, and demonstrates the potency of the human faculties. After the Cosmos, the Microcosm; after the infinitely great, the infinitely small. The body is in the soul, the soul is in the mind, the mind is in God. The life of the soul is the true life of the man. Of all his various faculties, that which rules all, that which exalts our nature, is Thought. By means of it we rise to the contemplation of the universe, and becoming in our turn creators, we raise the edifice of science; through the intellect the affections become purified, the will becomes strengthened. True liberty is acquired, and will and action becoming one through thought, we become heroes.

This education of the soul, or rather this elevation and glory of thought, which draws with it the will and the affections, not by means of blind faith or supernatural grace, not through an irrational and mystical impulse, but by the strength of a reformed intellect and by a palpable and well-considered enthusiasm, which science and the contemplation of Nature alone can give, this is the keynote of the poem. It is composed of two parts, each of which is divided into five dialogues: the first part, which may be called psychological, shows, by means of various figures and symbols drawn from Nature, how the divine light is always present to us, is inherent in man; it presents itself to the senses and to the comprehension: man constantly rejects and ignores it; sometimes the soul strives to rise up to it, and the poet describes the struggle with the opposing affections which are involved in this effort, and shows how at last the man of intelligence overcomes these contending powers and fatal impulses which conflict within us, and by virtue of harmony and the fusion of the opposites the intellect becomes one with the affections, and man realizes the good and rises to the knowledge of

the true. All conflicting desires being at last united, they become fixed upon one object, one great intent—the love of the Divine, which is the highest truth and the highest good. In "Gli Eroici Furori" we see Bruno as a man, as a philosopher, and as a believer: here he reveals himself as the hero of thought. Even as Christ was the hero of faith, and sacrificed himself for it, so Bruno declares himself ready to sacrifice himself for science. It is also a literary, a philosophical, and a religious work; form, however, is sacrificed to the idea—so absorbed is the author in the idea that he often ignores form altogether. An exile wandering from place to place, he wrote hurriedly and seldom or ever had he the opportunity of revising what he had written down. His mind in the impulsiveness of its improvisation was like the volcano of his native soil, which, rent by subterranean flames, sends forth from its vortices of fire, at the same time smoke, ashes, turbid floods, stones, and lava. He contemplates the soul, and seeks to understand its language; he is a physiologist and a naturalist, merged in the mystic and the enlightened devotee.

Bruno might have made a fixed home for himself in England, as so many of his compatriots had done, and have continued to enjoy the society of such men as Sir Philip Sydney, Fulke Greville, and, perchance, also of Shakespeare himself, who was in London about that time; but his self-imposed mission allowed him no rest; he must go forth, and carry his doctrines to the world, and forget the pleasures of friendship and the ties of comfort in the larger love of humanity; his work was to awaken souls out of their lethargy, to inspire them with the love of the highest good and of truth; to teach that God is to be found in the study of Nature, that the laws of the visible world will explain those of the invisible, the union of science and humanity with Nature and with God.

Bruno returned to Paris in 1585, being at that time tutor in the family of Mauvissier, who had been recalled from England by his Sovereign. During Bruno's second sojourn in Paris efforts were made by Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, and others, to induce him to return to his allegiance to the Church, and to be reconciled to the Pope; but Bruno declined these overtures, and soon after left Paris for Germany, where he arrived on foot, his only burden being a few books.

He visited Marburg and Wurtemburg, remaining in the latter place two years, earning his bread by teaching.

Prague and Frankfort were next visited; ever the same courage and boldness characterised his teaching, and ever the same scanty welcome was accorded to it,

although in every city and university crowds of the intelligent listened to his lectures; but the Church never lost sight of Bruno, he was always under surveillance, and few dared to show themselves openly his friends. Absorbed in his studies and intent upon his work, writing with feverish haste, he observed nothing of the invisible net which his enemies kept spread about him, and while his slanderers were busy in doing him injury he was occupied in teaching the mnemonic art, and explaining his system of philosophy to the young Lutherans who attended his lectures; in settling the basis of a new and rational religion, and in writing Latin verses; using ever greater diligence with his work, almost as if he felt that the time was drawing near in which he would be no longer at liberty to work and teach.

It was during the early part of the pontificate of Gregory XIV. that Bruno received letters from Mocenigo in Venice, urging him to return to Italy, and to go and stay with him in Venice, and instruct him in the secrets of science. Bruno was beginning to tire of this perpetually wandering life, and after several letters from Mocenigo, full of fine professions of friendship and protection, Bruno, longing to see his country again, turned his face towards Venice.

In those days men of superior intellect were often considered to be magicians or sorcerers; Mocenigo, after enticing Bruno to Venice, insisted upon his teaching him "the secret of memory and other things that he knew."

The philosopher with untiring patience tried to instil into this dull head the principles of logic, the elements of mathematics, and the rudiments of the mnemonic art; but the pupil hated study, and had no faculty of thought; yet he insisted that Bruno should make science clearly known to him! But this was probably only to initiate a quarrel with Bruno, whom he intended afterwards to betray, and deliver into the hands of the Church.

The Holy Office would have laid hands on Bruno immediately on his arrival in Italy, but being assured by Mocenigo that he could not escape, they left him a certain liberty, so that he might more surely compromise himself, while his enemies were busy collecting evidence against him. When at last his eyes became opened to what was going on about him, and he could no longer ignore the peril of his position, it was too late; Bruno could not get away, and was told by Mocenigo that if he stayed not by his own will and pleasure, he would be compelled to remain where he was. Bruno, however, made his preparations for departure, and sent his things on to Frankfort, intending to leave the next day himself; but in the morning, while he was still in bed, Mocenigo entered the

chamber, pretending that he wished to speak with him; then calling his servant Bartolo and five or six gondoliers, who waited without, they forced Bruno to rise, and conducted him to a garret, and locked him in. There he passed the first day of that imprisonment which was to last for eight years. The next day he went over the lagoon in a gondola, in the company of his jailors, who took him to the prison of the Holy Office, and left him there. Levi devotes many pages to the accusations brought against Giordano Bruno by the Inquisitors, and the depositions and denunciations made against him by his enemies. The Court was opened without delay, and most of the provinces of Italy were represented by their delegates in the early part of the trial; Bruno himself, being interrogated, gave an account in detail of his life, of his wanderings, of his occupations and works: serene and dignified before this terrible tribunal, he expounded his doctrine, its principles, and logical consequences. He spoke of the universe, of the infinite worlds in infinite space, of the divinity in all things, of the unity of all things, the dependence and inter-dependence of all things, and of the existence of God in all. After nine months' imprisonment in Venice, towards the end of January 1593, Bruno, in chains, was conveyed from the Bridge of Sighs through the lagoons to Ancona, where he remained incarcerated until the prison of the Roman Inquisition received him. If we look upon "Gli Eroici Furori" as a prophetical poem, we see that his sufferings in the loneliness of his prison and in the torture-chamber of the Inquisition passed by anticipation before his mind in the book written when he was free and a wanderer in strange lands.

> "By what condition, nature, or fell chance,
> In living death, dead life I live?"

he writes eight years and more before he ever breathed the stifling air of a dungeon; and again:

> "The soul nor yields nor bends to these rough blows,
> But bears, exulting, this long martyrdom,
> And makes a harmony of these sharp pangs."

Further details of the trial of Giordano Bruno are to be found in Levi's book. It is well known how he received the sentence of death passed upon him, saying: "You, O judges! feel perchance more terror in pronouncing this judgment than I do in hearing it." The day fixed for the burning, which was to take place in the Campo dei Fiori, was the 17th February in the year 1600. Rome was full of pilgrims from all parts, come to celebrate the jubilee of Pope Clement VIII.

Bruno was hardly fifty years old at this time; his face was thin and pale, with dark, fiery eyes; the forehead luminous with thought, his body frail and bearing the signs of torture; his hands in chains, his feet bare, he walked with slow steps in the early morning towards the funeral pile. Brightly shone the sun, and the flames leapt upwards and mingled with his ardent rays; Bruno stood in the midst with his arms crossed, his head raised, his eyes open; when all was consumed, a monk took a handful of the ashes and scattered them in the wind. A month later, the Bishop of Sidonia presented himself at the Treasury of the Pope, and demanded two scudi in payment for having degraded Fra Giordano the heretic.

"L'incendio è tal, ch'io m'ardo e non mi sfaccio."

EROICI FURORI.

THE

HEROIC ENTHUSIASTS.

First Dialogue.

TANSILLO, CICADA.

TANS. The enthusiasms most suitable to be first brought forward and considered are those that I now place before you in the order that seems to me most fitting.

CIC. Begin, then, to read.

TANSILLO.

1.

Ye Muses, that so oft I have repulsed,
That, now importuned, haste to cure my pain,
And to console me in my woes
With verses, rhymes, and exaltation
Such as to others ye did never show,
Who yet do vaunt themselves of laurel and of myrtle
Be near me now, my anchor and my port,
Lest I for sport should towards some others turn.

O Mount! O Goddesses! O Fountain!
Where and with whom I dwell, converse and nourish me,
Where peacefully I ponder and grow fair;
I rise, I live: heart, spirit, brows adorn;
Death, cypresses, and hells
You change to life, to laurels, and eternal stars!

It is to be supposed that he oftimes and for divers reasons had repulsed the Muses; first, because he could not be idle as a priest of the Muses should be, for idleness cannot exist there, where the ministers and servants of envy, ignorance, and malignity are to be combated. Moreover, he could not force himself to the

study of philosophies, which though they be not the most mature, yet ought, as kindred of the Muses, to precede them. Besides which, being drawn on one side by the tragic Melpomene, with more matter than spirit, and on the other side by the comic Thalia, with more spirit than matter, it came to pass that, oscillating between the two, he remained neutral and inactive, rather than operative. Finally, the dictum of the censors, who, restraining him from that which was high and worthy, and towards which he was naturally inclined, sought to enslave his genius, and from being free in virtue they would have rendered him contemptible under a most vile and stupid hypocrisy. At last, in the great whirl of annoyances by which he was surrounded, it happened that, not having wherewith to console him, he listened to those who are said to intoxicate him with such exaltation, verses, and rhymes, as they had never demonstrated to others; because this work shines more by its originality than by its conventionality.

CIC. Say, what do you mean by those who vaunt themselves of myrtle and laurel?

TANS. Those may and do boast of the myrtle who sing of love: if they bear themselves nobly, they may wear a crown of that plant consecrated to Venus, of which they know the potency. Those may boast of the laurel who sing worthily of things pertaining to heroes, substituting heroic souls for speculative and moral philosophy, and praising them and setting as mirrors and exemplars for political and civil actions.

CIC. There are then many species of poets and crowns?

TANS. Not only as many as there are Muses, but a great many more; for although genius is to be met with, yet certain modes and species of human ingenuity cannot be thus classified.

CIC. There are certain schoolmen who barely allow Homer to be a poet, and set down Virgil, Ovid, Martial, Hesiod, Lucretius, and many others as versifiers, judging them by the rules of poetry of Aristotle.

TANS. Know for certain, my brother, that such as these are beasts. They do not consider that those rules serve principally as a frame for the Homeric poetry, and for other similar to it, and they set up one as a great poet, high as Homer, and disallow those of other vein, and art, and enthusiasm, who in their various kinds are equal, similar, or greater.

CIC. So that Homer was not a poet who depended upon rules, but was the cause

of the rules which serve for those who are more apt at imitation than invention, and they have been used by him who, being no poet, yet knew how to take the rules of Homeric poetry into service, so as to become, not a poet or a Homer, but one who apes the Muse of others?

TANS. Thou dost well conclude that poetry is not born in rules, or only slightly and accidentally so; the rules are derived from the poetry, and there are as many kinds and sorts of true rules as there are kinds and sorts of true poets.

CIC. How then are the true poets to be known?

TANS. By the singing of their verses; in that singing they give delight, or they edify, or they edify and delight together.

CIC. To whom then are the rules of Aristotle useful?

TANS. To him who, unlike Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, and others, could not sing without the rules of Aristotle, and who, having no Muse of his own, would coquette with that of Homer.

CIC. Then they are wrong, those stupid pedants of our days, who exclude from the number of poets those who do not use words and metaphors conformable to, or whose principles are not in union with, those of Homer and Virgil; or because they do not observe the custom of invocation, or because they weave one history or tale with another, or because they finish the song with an epilogue on what has been said and a prelude on what is to be said, and many other kinds of criticism and censure, from whence it seems they would imply that they themselves, if the fancy took them, could be the true poets; and yet in fact they are no other than worms, that know not how to do anything well, but are born only to gnaw and befoul the studies and labours of others; and not being able to attain celebrity by their own virtue and ingenuity, seek to put themselves in the front, by hook or by crook, through the defects and errors of others.

TANS. Now, to return from this long digression, I say that there are as many sorts of poets as there are human sentiments and ideas; and to these it is possible to adapt garlands, not only of every species of plant, but also of other kinds of material. So the crowns of poets are made not only of myrtle and of laurel, but of vine leaves for the white-wine verses, and of ivy for the bacchanals; of olive for sacrifice and laws; of poplar, of elm, and of corn for agriculture; of cypress for funerals, and innumerable others for other occasions; and, if it please you, also of that material signified by a good fellow when he exclaimed:

O Friar Leek! O Poetaster!
That in Milan didst buckle on thy wreath
Composed of salad, sausage, and the pepper-caster.

CIC. Now surely he of divers moods, which he exhibits in various ways, may cover himself with the branches of different plants, and may hold discourse worthily with the Muses, for they are his aura or comforter, his anchor or support, and his harbour, to which he retires in times of labour, of agitation, and storm. Hence he cries: "O mountain of Parnassus, where I abide! Muses, with whom I converse! Fountain of Helicon, where I am nourished. Mountain, that affordest me a quiet dwelling-place! Muses, that inspire me with profound doctrines. Fountain, that cleanses me! Mountain, on whose ascent my heart uprises! Muses, that in discourse revive my spirit. Well, whose arbours cool my brows! Change my death into life, my cypress to laurels, and my hells into heavens: that is, give me immortality, make me poet, render me illustrious!"

TANS. Well; because to those whom Heaven favours the greatest evils turn to greatest good, for needs or necessities bring forth labours and studies, and these most often bring the glory of immortal splendour.

CIC. For to die in one age makes us live in all the rest. Go on.

TANS. Then follows:

2.

In form and place like to Parnassus is my heart,
And up unto this mount for safety I ascend;
My Muses are my thoughts, and they present to me
At every hour new beauties counted out.
The frequent tears that from my eyes do pour,
These make my fount of Helicon.
By such a mount, such nymphs, such floods,
As Heaven did please, was I a poet born.
No king of any kingdom,
No favouring hand of emperor,
No highest priest nor great pastor,
Has given to me such graces, honours, privileges,
As are those laurel leaves with which
O'ershadowed are my heart, my thoughts, my tears.

Here he declares his mountain to be the exalted affection of his heart, his Muses he calls the beauties and attributes of the object of his affections, and the fountain is his tears. In that mountain affection is kindled; through those beauties enthusiasm is conceived, and by those tears the enthusiastic affection is demonstrated; and he esteems himself not less grandly crowned by his heart, his thoughts, and his tears than others are by the hand of kings, emperors, and popes.

CIC. Explain to me what he means by his heart being in form like Parnassus.

TANS. Because the human heart has two summits, which terminate in one base or root; and, spiritually, from one affection of the heart proceed two opposites, love and hate; and the mountain of Parnassus has two summits and one base.

CIC. On to the next!

3.

> The captain calls his warriors to arms,
> And at the trumpet's sound they all
> Under one sign and standard come.
> But yet for some in vain the call is heard,
> Heedless and unprepared, they mind it not.
> One foe he kills, and the insane unborn,
> He banishes from out the camp in scorn.
> And thus the soul, when foiled her high designs,
> Would have all those opponents dead or gone;
> One object only I regard,
> One face alone my mind does fill,
> One beauty keeps me fixed and still;
> One arrow pierced my heart, and one
> The fire with which alone I burn,
> And towards one paradise I turn.

This captain is the human will, which dwells in the depths of the soul with the small helm of reason to govern and guide the interior powers against the wave of natural impulses. He, with the sound of the trumpet—that is, by fixed resolve—calls all the warriors or invokes all the powers; called warriors because they are in continual strife and opposition; and their affections, which are all contrary thoughts, some towards one and some towards the other side inclining, and he tries to bring them all under one flag—one settled end and aim. Some are called

in vain to put in a ready appearance, and are chiefly those which proceed from the lower instincts, and which obey the reason either not at all, or very little; and forcing himself to prevent their actions and condemn those which cannot be prevented, he shows himself as one who would kill those and banish these, now by the scourge of scorn, now by the sword of anger. One only is the object of his regards, and on this he is intently fixed; one prospect delights and fills his imagination, one beauty pleases, and he rests in that, because the operation of the intelligence is not a work of movement but of quiet; from thence alone he derives that barb which, killing him, constitutes the consummation of perfection. He burns with one fire alone; that is, one affection consumes him.

CIC. Why is love symbolized by fire?

TANS. For many reasons, but at present let this one suffice thee: that as love converts the thing loved into the lover, so amongst the elements fire is active and potent to convert all the others, simple and composite, into itself.

CIC. Go on.

TANS. He knows one paradise—that is, one consummation, because paradise commonly signifies the end; which is again distinguished from that which is absolute in truth and essence from that which is so in appearance and shadow or form. Of the first there can only be one, as there can be only one ultimate and one primal good. Of the second the modes are infinite.

4.

> Love, Fate, Love's object, and cold Jealousy,
> Delight me, and torment, content me, and afflict.
> The insensate boy, the blind and sinister,
> The loftiest beauty, and my death alone
> Show to me paradise, and take away,
> Present me with all good, and steal it from me,
> So that the heart, the mind, the spirit, and the soul,
> Have joy, pain, cold, and weight in their control.
> Who will deliver me from war?
> Who give to me the fruit of love in peace?
> And that which vexes that which pleases me
> (Opening the gates of heaven and closing them)
> Who will set far apart
> To make acceptable my fires and tears?

He shows the reason and origin of passion; and whence it is conceived; and how enthusiasm is born, by ploughing the field of the Muses and scattering the seed of his thoughts and waiting for the fruitful harvest, discovering in himself the fervour of the affections instead of in the sun, and in place of the rain is the moisture of his eyes. He brings forward four things: Love, Fate, the Object, and Jealousy. Here love is not a low, ignoble, and unworthy motor, but a noble lord and chief. Fate is none other than the pre-ordained disposition and order of casualties to which he is subject by his destiny. The object is the thing loved and the correlative of the lover. Jealousy, it is clear, must be the ardour of the lover about the thing loved, of which it boots not to speak to him who knows what love is, and which it is vain to try to explain to others. Love delights, because to him who loves it is a pleasure to love; and he who really loves would not cease from loving. This is referred to in the following sonnet:

5.

> Beloved, sweet, and honourable wound,
> From fairest dart that love did choose,
> Lofty, most beauteous and potential zeal,
> That makes the soul in its own flames find weal!
> What power or spell of herb or magic art
> Can tear thee from the centre of my heart,
> Since he, who with an ever-growing zest,
> Tormenting most, yet most does make me blest?
> How can I of this weight unburdened be,
> If pain the cure, and joy the sore give me?
> Sweet is my pain: to this world new and rare.
> Eyes! ye are the bow and torches of my lord!
> Double the flames and arrows in my breast,
> For languishing is sweet and burning best.

Fate vexes and grieves by undesirable and unfortunate events, or because it makes the subject feel unworthy of the object, and out of proportion with the dignity of the latter, or because a perfect sympathy does not exist, or for other reasons and obstacles that arise. The object satisfies the subject, which is nourished by no other, seeks no other, is occupied by no other, and banishes every other thought. Jealousy torments, because although she is the daughter of Love, and is derived from him, and is his companion who always goes with him,

and is a sign of the same, being understood as a necessary consequence wherever love is found (as may be observed of whole generations who, from the coldness of the region and lateness of development, learn little, love less, and of jealousy know nothing), yet, notwithstanding its kinship, association, and signification, jealousy comes to trouble and poisons all that it finds of beautiful and of good in Love. Therefore I said in another sonnet:

6.

> Oh, wicked child of Envy and of Love!
> That turnest into pain thy father's joys,
> To evil Argus-eyed, but blind as mole to good.
> Minister of torment! Jealousy!
> Fetid harpy! Tisiphone infernal!
> Who steals and poisons others' good,
> Under thy cruel breath does languish
> The sweetest flower of all my hopes.
> Proud of thyself, unlovely one,
> Bird of sorrow and harbinger of ill,
> The heart thou visitest by thousand doors;
> If entrance unto thee could be denied,
> The reign of Love would so much fairer be,
> As would this world were death and hate away.

To the above is added, that Jealousy not only is sometimes the ruin and death of the lover, but often kills Love itself, because Love comes to be so much under its influence that it is impelled to despise the object, and in fact becomes alienated from it, especially when it engenders disdain.

CIC. Explain now the ideas which follow. Why is Love called the "insensate boy"?

TANS. I will tell you. Love is called the insensate boy, not because he is so of himself, but because he brings certain ones into subjection, and dwells in such subjects, since the more intellectual and speculative one is, the more Love raises the genius and purifies the intellect, rendering it alert, studious, and circumspect, promoting a condition of valorous animosity and an emulation of virtues and dignities by the desire to please and to make itself worthy of the thing loved; others, and they are the largest number, call him mad and foolish, because he drives them distracted, and hurries them into excesses, by which the spirit, soul,

and body become sickly, and inept to consider and distinguish that which is seemly from that which is distorted; thus rendering them subject to scorn, derision, and reproach.

CIC. It is commonly said that love makes fools of the old and makes the young wise.

TANS. That drawback does not happen to all the aged, nor that advantage to all the young; the one is true of the weak, and the other of the robust. One thing is certain, that he who loves wisely in youth will in age not go astray. But derision is for those of mature age, into whose hands Love puts the alphabet.

CIC. Tell me now why Fate is called blind and bad.

TANS. Again, blind and bad is not said of Destiny itself, because it is of the same order and number and measure as the universe; but as to the subjects it is said to be blind, for they are blind to fate, she being so uncertain. So also is Fate said to be evil, because every living mortal who laments and complains, blames her. As the Apulian poet says:

> How is it, or what means it, Mæcenas,
> That none on earth contented with that fate appear,
> Which Reason or Heaven has assigned to them?

In the same way he calls the object the highest beauty, as it is that alone which has power of attracting him to itself; and thus he holds it more worthy, more noble, and feels it predominant and superior as he becomes subject and captive to it. "My death itself," he says of Jealousy, because as Love has no more close companion than she, so also he feels he has no greater enemy; as nothing is more hurtful to iron than rust, which is produced by it.

CIC. Now, since you have begun so, continue to show bit by bit that which remains.

TANS. So will I. He says next of Love: he shows me Paradise, in order to prove that Love himself is not blind, and does not himself render any lovers blind, except through the ignoble characteristics of the subject; even as the birds of night become blind in the sunshine. As for himself, Love brightens, clears, and opens the intellect, permeating all and producing miraculous effects.

CIC. Much of this, it seems to me, the Nolano demonstrates in another sonnet:

7.

Love, through whom high truth I do discern,
Thou openest the black diamond doors;
Through the eyes enters my deity, and through seeing
Is born, lives, is nourished, and has eternal reign;
Shows forth what heaven holds, earth and hell:
Makes present true images of the absent;
Gains strength: and drawing with straight aim,
Wounds, lays bare and frets the inmost heart.
Attend now, thou base hind unto the truth,
Bend down the ear to my unerring word;
Open, open, if thou canst the eyes, foolish perverted one!
Thou understanding little, call'st him child,
Because thou swiftly changest, fugitive he seems,
Thyself not seeing, call'st him blind.

Love shows Paradise in order that the highest things may be heard, understood, and accomplished; or it makes the things loved, grand—at least in appearance. He says, Fate takes love away; because, often in spite of the lover, it does not concede, and that which he sees and desires is distant and adverse to him. Every good he sets before me, he says of the object, because that which is indicated by the finger of Love seems to him the only thing, the principal, and the whole. "Steals it from me," he says of Jealousy, not simply in order that it may not be present to me; removing it from my eyesight, but in order that good may not be good, but an acute evil; sweet, not sweet, but an agonized longing; while the heart—that is, the will, has joy by the great force of love, whatever may be the result; the mind—that is, the intellectual part, has pain through the Fear of Fate, which fate does not favour the lover; the spirit—that is, the natural affections, are cold because they are snatched from the object which gives joy to the heart, and which might give pleasure to the mind; the soul—that is, the suffering and sensitive soul, is heavy—that is, finds itself oppressed with the heavy burden of jealousy which torments it. To this consideration of his state he adds a tearful lament, and says: "Who will deliver me from war, and give me peace? or who will separate that which pains and injures me from that which I so love, and which opens to me the gates of heaven, so that the fervid flames in my heart may be acceptable, and fortunate the fountains of my tears?" Continuing this proposition, he adds:

8.

Ah me! oppress some other, spiteful Fate!
Jealousy, get thee hence—begone! away!
These may suffice to show me all the grace
Of changeful Love, and of that noble face.
He takes my life, she gives me death,
She wings, he burns my heart,
He murders it, and she revives the soul:
My succour she, my grievous burden he!
But what say I of Love?
If he and she one subject be, or form,
If with one empire and one rule they stamp
One sole impression in my heart of hearts,
Then are they two, yet one, on which do wait
The mirth and melancholy of my state!

Four beginnings and extremes of two opposites he would reduce to two beginnings and one opposite: he says, then, oppress others—that is, let it suffice thee, O my Fate! that thou hast so much oppressed me; and since thou canst not exist without exercise of thyself, turn elsewhere thy anger. Get thee hence out of the world, thou Jealousy, because one of those two others which remain can supply your functions and offices; yet, O Fate! thou art none other than my love; and thou, Jealousy, art not external to the substance of the same. He alone, then, remains to deprive me of life, to burn me, to give me death, and to be to me the burden of my bones; for he delivers me from death—wings, enlivens, and sustains. Then two beginnings and one opposite he reduces to one beginning and one result, exclaiming: But what do I say of Love? If this presence, this object, is his empire, and appears none other than the empire of Love, the rule of Love and its own rule; the impression of Love which appears in the substance of my heart, is then no other impression than its own, and therefore after having said "Noble face," replies "Inconstant Love."[A]

[A] Vago amore.

Second Dialogue.

TANSILLO.

Now begins the enthusiast to display the affections and uncover the wounds which are for a sign in his body, and in substance or essence in his soul, and he says thus:

9.

> Of Love the standard-bearer I;
> My hopes are ice, and glowing my desires.
> At once I tremble, sparkle, freeze, and burn;
> Am mute, and fill the air with clamorous plaints.
> Water my eyes distil, sparks from my heart.
> I live, I die, make merry and lament.
> Living the waters, the burning never dies,
> For in my eyes is Thetys, and Vulcan in my heart.
> Others I love; myself I hate.
> If I be winged, others are changed to stone;
> They high as heaven, if I be lowly set.
> I cease not to pursue, they ever flee away;
> If I do call, yet none will answer me.
> The more I search, the more is hid from me.

In accordance with this, I will continue with that which just before I said to thee, that one should not strive so hard to prove that which is so very evident—namely, that there is nothing pure and unalloyed; and some have said that no mixed thing is a real entity, as alloyed gold is not real gold, manufactured wine is not real simple wine. Almost all things are made up of opposites, whence it comes that the success of our affections, through the mixture that is in things, can afford no pleasure without some bitterness; and more than this, I will say, that were it not for the bitter, there would be no sweet; seeing that it is through fatigue that we find pleasure in repose; separation is the cause of our pleasure in union; and, examining generally, we shall ever find that one opposite is the reason that the other opposite pleases and is desired.

CIC. Then there is no delight without the contrary?

TANS. Certainly not; as without the opposite there is no pain; as is shown by that golden Pythagorean poet when he says:

Hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, nec
Respiciunt, clausæ tenebris, e carcere cæco.

This, then, is what the mixture of things causes, and hence it is that no one is pleased with his own state, except some senseless blockhead, who is so all the more the deeper is the degree of obscure folly in which he is sunk; then he has little or no apprehension of pain; he enjoys the actual present without fearing the future; he enjoys that which is and that in which he finds himself, and has neither care nor sorrow for what may be; and, in short, has no sense of that opposition which is symbolized by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

CIC. From this we see that ignorance is the mother of sensual felicity and beatitude, and this same is the garden of paradise of the animals; as is made clear in the dialogues of the Kabala of the horse Pegasus; and as says the wise Solomon, "Whoso increases knowledge increases sorrow."

TANS. Hence it appears that heroic love is a torment, because it does not enjoy the present, as does animal love, but is of the future and the absent; and, on the contrary, it feels ambition, emulation, suspicion and dread. One evening, after supper, a certain neighbour of ours said: "Never was I more jolly than I am now." John Bruno, father of the Nolano, answered him: "Never wert thou more foolish than now."

CIC. You would imply, then, that he who is sad is wise, and that other who is more sad is wiser?

TANS. On the contrary, I mean that there is in these another species of foolishness and a worse.

CIC. Who, then, is wise, if foolish is he who is content, and foolish he who is sad?

TANS. He who is neither merry nor sad.

CIC. Who? He who sleeps? He who is without feeling—who is dead?

TANS. No; but he who is quick, both seeing and hearing, and who, considering evil and good, estimating the one and the other as variable, and consistent in motion, mutation, and vicissitude, in such wise that the end of one opposite is the commencement of another, and the extreme of the one is the beginning of the other; whose spirit is neither depressed nor elated, but is moderate in inclinations and temperate in desires; to him pleasure is not pleasure, having ever present the

end of it; equally, pain to him is not pain, because by the force of reasoning he has present the end of that too. So the sage holds all mutable things as things that are not, and affirms that they are no other than vanity and nothingness, because time has to eternity the proportion of the point to the line.

CIC. So that we can never hold the proposition of being contented or discontented, without holding the proposition of our own foolishness, which we thereby confess; therefore no one who reasons, and consequently no one who participates, can be wise; in short, all men are fools.

TANS. I do not intend to infer that; for I will hold of highest wisdom him who could really say at one time the opposite of what he says at another—never was I less gay than now; or, never was I less sad than at present.

CIC. How? Do you not make two contrary qualities where there are two opposite affections? Why, I say, do you take as two virtues, and not as one vice and one virtue, the being less gay and the being less sad?

TANS. Because both the contraries in excess—that is, in so far as they exceed—are vices, because they pass the line; and the same, in so far as they diminish, come to be virtues, because they are contained within limits.

CIC. How? The being less merry and the being less sad are not one virtue and one vice, but are two virtues?

TANS. On the contrary, I say they are one and the same virtue; because the vice is there where the opposite is; the opposite is chiefly there where the extreme is; the greatest opposite is the nearest to the extreme; the least or nothing is in the middle, where the opposites meet, and are one and identical; as between the coldest and hottest and the hotter and colder, in the middle point is that which you may call hot and cold, or neither hot nor cold, without contradiction. In that way whoso is least content and least joyful is in the degree of indifference, and finds himself in the habitation of temperance, where the virtue and condition of a strong soul exist, which bends not to the south wind nor to the north. This, then, to return to the point, is how this enthusiastic hero, who explains himself in the present part, is different from the other baser ones—not as virtue from vice, but as a vice which exists in a subject more divine or divinely, from a vice which exists in a subject more savage or savagely; so that the difference is according to the different subjects and modes, and not according to the form of vice.

CIC. I can very well conceive, from what you have said, the condition of that

heroic enthusiast, who says, "My hopes are ice and my desires are glowing," because he is not in the temperance of mediocrity, but, in the excess of contradictions, his soul is discordant, he shivers in his frozen hopes and burns in his glowing desires; in his eagerness he is clamorous, and he is mute from fear; his heart burns in its affection for others, and for compassion of himself he sheds tears from his eyes; dying in the laughter of others, he is alive in his own lamentations; and like him who no longer belongs to himself, he loves others and hates himself; because matter, as say the physicists, with that measure with which it loves the absent form, hates the present one. And so in the octave finishes the war which the soul has within itself; and when he says in the sistina, but if I be winged, others change to stone and that which follows; he shows his passion for the warfare which he wages with external contradictions. I remember having read in Jamblichus, where he treats of the Egyptian mysteries, this sentence: "Impius animam dissidentem habet: unde nec secum ipse convenire potest, neque cum aliis."

TANS. Now listen to another sonnet, as sequel to what has been said:

10.

> By what condition, nature, or fell chance,
> In living death, dead life I live?
> Love has me dead, alack! and such a death,
> That death and life together I must lose.
> Devoid of hope, I reach the gates of hell,
> And laden with desire arrive at heaven:
> Thus am I subject to eternal opposites,
> And, banished both from heaven and from hell,
> No pause nor rest my torments know,
> Because between two running wheels I go,
> Of which one here, the other there compels,
> And like Ixion I pursue and flee;
> For to the double discourse do I fit
> The crosswise lesson of the spur and bit.

He shows how much he suffers from this dislocation and distraction in himself; while the affections, leaving the mean and middle way of temperance, tend towards the one and the other extreme, and so are wafted on high or towards the right, and are also transported downwards to the left.

CIC. How is it that, not being really of one or the other extreme, it does not come to be in the conditions or terms of virtue?

TANS. It is then in a state of virtue when it keeps to the middle, declining from one to the other opposite; but when it leads towards the extremes, inclining to one or the other of those, it fails so entirely from being virtue, that it is a double vice, which consists in this, that the thing recedes from its nature, the perfection of which consists in unity, and there where the opposites meet, its composition and virtue exist. This, then, is how he is dead alive, or living dying; whence he says, "In a living death a dead life I live." He is not dead, because he lives in the object; not alive, because he is dead in himself; deprived of death, because he gives birth to thoughts; deprived of life, because he does not grow or feel in himself. He is now most dejected through meditating on the high intelligence, and the perceived feebleness of power; and most elated by the aspiration of heroic longing, which passes far beyond his limits, and is most exalted by the intellectual appetite; which has not for its fashion or aim to add number to number, is most dejected by the violence done to him by the sensual opposite which drags him down towards hell. So that, finding himself thus ascending and descending, he feels within his soul the greatest dissension that is possible to be felt, and he remains in a state of confusion through this rebellion of the senses, which urge him thither where reason restrains, and *vice versâ*. This same is thoroughly demonstrated in the following sentences, where the Reason, under the name of "Filenio" asks, and the enthusiast replies under the name of "Shepherd," who labours in the care of the flocks and herds of his thoughts, which he nourishes in the submission to and service of his nymph, which is the affection of that object to which he is captive.

11.

FILENIO. Shepherd!

SHEPHERD. What wilt thou?

F. What doest thou?

S. I suffer.

F. Wherefore?

S. Because neither life has me for his own, nor death.

F. Who's to blame?

S. Love.

F. That rascal?

S. That rascal.

F. Where is he?

S. He holds me tight in my heart's core.

F. What does he?

S. Wounds me.

F. Who?

S. Me.

F. Thee?

S. Yes.

F. With what?

S. With the eyes, the gates of heaven and of hell.

F. Dost hope?

S. I hope.

F. For pity?

S. For pity.

F. From whom?

S. From him who racks me night and day.

F. Has he any?

S. I know not.

F. Thou art a fool.

S. How if such folly be pleasing to my soul?

F. Does he promise?

S. No.

F. Does he deny?

S. Not at all.

F. Is he silent?

S. Yes, for so much purity (*onestà*) robs me of my boldness.

F. Thou ravest.

S. How so?

F. In vain efforts.

S. His scorn more than my torments do I fear.

Here he says that he craves for love, and he complains of it, yet not because he loves—seeing that to no true lover can love be displeasing; but because he loves unhappily, whilst those beams which are the rays of those lights, and which themselves, according as they are perverse and antagonistic, or really kind and gracious, become the gates which lead towards heaven or towards hell. In this way he is kept in hope of future and uncertain mercy, but actually in a state of present and certain torment, and although he sees his folly quite clearly, nevertheless he does not care to correct himself in it, or even to feel displeased with it, but rather does he feel satisfied with it, as he shows when he says:

Never let me of Love complain,
For Love alone can ease my pain.

Here is shown another species of enthusiasm born from the light of reason, which excites fear and suppresses the aforesaid reason in order not to commit any action which might vex or irritate the thing loved. He says, then, that hope rests in the future, without anything being promised or denied; therefore, he is silent and asks nothing, for fear of offending purity (*l'onestade*). He does not venture to explain himself and make a proposition, lest he be rejected with repugnance or accepted with reserve; for he thinks the evil that there might be in the one would be over-balanced by the good in the other. He shows himself, then, ready to suffer for ever his own torment, rather than to open the door to an opportunity through which the thing loved might be perturbed and saddened.

CIC. Herein he proves that his love is truly heroic; because he proposes to himself as the chief aim, not corporeal beauty, but rather the grace of the spirit, and the inclination of the affections in which, rather than in the beauty of the body, that love that has in it the divine, is eternal.

TANS. Thou knowest that, as the Platonic ideas are divided into three species, of which one tends to the contemplative or speculative life, one to active morality, and the third to the idle and voluptuous, so are there three species of love, of which one raises itself from the contemplation of bodily form to the consideration of the spiritual and divine; the other only continues in the delight of seeing and conversing; the third from seeing proceeds to precipitate into the concupiscence of touch. Of these three modes others are composed, according as the first may be coupled with the second or the third, or as all the three modes may combine together, of which one and all may be divided into others, according to the affections of the enthusiast, as these tend more towards the spiritual object, or more towards the corporeal, or equally towards the one and the other. Hence it comes, that of those who find themselves in this warfare, and are entangled in the meshes of love, some aim at enjoying, and they are incited to pluck the apple from the tree of corporeal beauty, without which acquisition, or at least the hope of it, they hold vain and worthy only of derision every amorous care; and in such-wise run all those who are of a barbarous nature, who neither do nor can seek to exalt themselves by loving worthy things, and aspiring to illustrious things, and higher still to things divine, by suitable studies and exercises, to which nothing can more richly and easily supply the wings than heroic love; others put before themselves the fruit of delight, which they take in

the aspect of the beauty and grace of the spirit, which glitters and shines in the beauty of the body, and certain of these, although they love the body and greatly desire to be united to it, bewailing its absence and being afflicted by separation, at the same time fear, lest presuming in this they may be deprived of that affability, conversation, friendship, and sympathy which are most precious to them; because to attempt this there cannot be more guarantee of success than there is risk of forfeiting that favour, which appears before the eyes of thought as a thing so glorious and worthy.

CIC. It is a worthy thing, oh Tansillo! for its many virtues and perfections, and it behoves human genius to seek, accept, nourish, and preserve a love like that; but one should take great care not to bow down or become enslaved to an object unworthy and base, lest we become sharers of the baseness and unworthiness of the same: appositely the Ferrarese poet says

> Who sets his foot upon the amorous snare,
> Lest he besmear his wings, let him beware.

TANS. To say the truth, that object, which beyond the beauty of the body has no other splendour, is not worthy of being loved otherwise than to make the race; and it seems to me the work of a pig or a horse to torment one's self about it, and as to myself, never was I more fascinated by such things than I am now fascinated by some statue or picture to which I am indifferent. It would then be a great dishonour to a generous soul, if, of a foul, vile, loose, and ignoble nature, although hid under an excellent symbol, it should be said: "I fear his scorn more than my torment."

Third Dialogue.

TANSILLO.

There are several varieties of enthusiasts, which may all be reduced to two kinds. While some only display blindness, stupidity, and irrational impetuosity, which tend towards savage madness, others by divine abstraction become in reality superior to ordinary men. And these again are of two kinds, for some having become the habitation of gods or divine spirits, speak and perform wonderful things, without themselves understanding the reason. Many such have been

uncultured and ignorant persons, into whom, being void of spirit and sense of their own, as into an empty chamber, the divine spirit and sense intrude, as it would have less power to show itself in those who are full of their own reason and sense. This divine spirit often desires that the world should know for certain, that those do not speak from their own knowledge and experience, but speak and act through some superior intelligence; for such, the mass of men vouchsafe more admiration and faith, while others, being skilful in contemplation and possessing innately a clear intellectual spirit, have an internal stimulus and natural fervour, excited by the love of the divine, of justice, of truth, of glory, and by the fire of desire and the breath of intention, sharpen their senses, and in the sulphur of the cogitative faculty, these kindle the rational light, with which they see more than ordinarily; and they come in the end to speak and act, not as vessels and instruments, but as chief artificers and experts.

CIC. Of these two which dost thou esteem higher?

TANS. The first have more dignity, power, and efficacy within themselves, because they have the divinity; the second *are* themselves worthy, potential, and efficacious, and *are* divine. The first are worthy, as is the ass which carries the sacraments; the second are as a sacred thing. In the first is contemplated and seen in effect the divinity, and that is beheld, adored, and obeyed; in the second is contemplated and seen the excellency of humanity itself. But now to the question. These enthusiasms of which we speak, and which we see exemplified in these sentences, are not oblivion, but a memory; they are not neglect of one's self, but love and desire of the beautiful and good, by means of which we are able to make ourselves perfect, by transforming and assimilating ourselves to it. It is not a precipitation, under the laws of a tyrannous fate, into the noose of animal affections, but a rational impetus, which follows the intellectual apprehension of the beautiful and the good, which knows whom it wishes to obey and to please, so that, by its nobility and light, it kindles and invests itself with qualities and conditions through which it appears illustrious and worthy. He (the enthusiast) becomes a god by intellectual contact with the divine object, and he has no thought for other than divine things, and shows himself insensible and impassive towards those things which are commonly felt, and about which others are mostly tormented; he fears nothing, and for love of the divine he despises other pleasures and gives no thought to this life. It is not a fury of black bile which sends him drifting outside of judgment, reason, and acts of prudence, and tossed by the discordant tempest, like those who, having violated certain laws of the divine Adrastia, are condemned to be scourged by the Furies, in

order that they may be excited by a dissonance as corporeal through seditions, destructions, and plagues, as it is spiritual, through the forfeiture of harmony between the perceptive and enjoying powers; but it is aglow kindled by the intellectual sun in the soul, and a divine impetus which lends it wings, with which, drawing nearer and nearer to the intellectual sun, and ridding itself of the rust of human cares, it becomes a gold tried and pure, has the perception of divine and internal harmony, and its thoughts and acts accord with the symmetry of the law, innate in all things. Not, as drunk from the cups of Circe, does he go dashing and stumbling, now in this and then in that ditch, now against this or that rock, or like a shifting Proteus, changing now to this, now to the other aspect, never finding place, fashion, or ground to stay and settle in; but, without spoiling the harmony, conquers and overcomes the horrid monsters, and however much he may swerve, he easily returns to himself[A] by means of those inward instincts that, like the nine Muses, dance and sing round the splendours of the universal Apollo, and under tangible images and material things, he comes to comprehend divine laws and counsels. It is true that sometimes, having love for his trusty escort, who is double, and because sometimes through occasional impediments he finds himself defrauded of his strength, then, as one insane and furious, he squanders away the love of that which he cannot comprehend; whence, confused by the obscurity of the divinity, he sometimes abandons the work, and then again returns, to force himself with his will thither, where he cannot arrive with the intellect. It is true also that he commonly wanders, and transports himself, now into one, now into another form of the double Eros; therefore, the principal lesson that Love gives to him is, that he contemplate the divine beauty in shadow, when he cannot do so in the mirror, and, like the suitors of Penelope, he entertain himself with the maids when he is not permitted to converse with the mistress. Now, in conclusion, you can comprehend, from what has been said, what is this enthusiast whose picture is put forth, when it is said:

12.

> If towards the shining light the butterfly,
> Winging his way knows not the burning flame,
> And if the thirsty stag, unmindful of the dart,
> Runs fainting to the brook,
> Or unicorn, unto the chaste breast running,
> Ignores the snare that is for him prepared,
> I, in the light, the fount, the bosom of my love
> Behold the flames, the arrows, and the chains.

If it be sweet in plaintiveness to droop,
Why does that lofty splendour dazzle me?
Wherefore the sacred arrow sweetly wound?
Why in this knot is my desire involved?
And why to me eternal irksomeness
Flames to my heart, darts to my breast and snares unto my soul?

[A] Facilmente ritorna al sesso.

Here he shows his love not to be like that of the butterfly, of the stag, and of the unicorn, who would flee away if they had knowledge of the fire, of the arrow, and of the snares, and who have no other sense than that of pleasure; but he is moved by a most sensible and only too evident passion, which forces him to love that fire more than any coolness; more that wound than any wholeness; more those fetters than any liberty. For this evil is not absolutely evil, but, through comparison with good (according to opinion), it is deceptive, like the sauce that old Saturn gets when he devours his own sons; for this evil absolutely in the eye of the Eternal, is comprehended either for good, or for guide which conduces to it, since this fire is the ardent desire of divine things, this arrow is the impression of the ray of the beauty of supernal light, these snares are the species of truth which unite our mind to the primal verity, and the species of good which unite and join to the primal and highest good. To that meaning I approached when I said:

13.

With such a fire and such a noble noose,
Beauty enkindles me, and pureness binds,
So that in flames and servitude I take delight,
Liberty takes flight and dreads the ice.
Such is the heat, that though I burn yet am I not destroyed,
The tie is such, the world with me gives praise.
Fear cannot freeze, nor pain unshackle me;
For soothing is the ardour, sweet the smart.
So high the light that burns me I discern,
And of so rich a thread the noose contrived
That, thought being born, the longing dies.
And since, within my heart shines such pure flames,
And so supreme a tie compels my will,
Let my shade serve, and let my ashes burn.

All the loves, if they be heroic and not purely animal, or what is called natural, and slaves to generation, as instruments of nature in a certain way, have for object the divinity, tend towards divine beauty, which first is communicated to souls and shines in them, and from them, or rather through them, it is communicated to bodies; whence it is that well-ordered affection loves the body or corporeal beauty, insomuch as it is an indication of beauty of spirit. Thus that which causes the attraction of love to the body is a certain spirituality which we see in it, and which is called beauty, and which does not consist in major or minor dimensions, nor in determined colours or forms, but in harmony and consonance of members and colours. This shows an affinity between the spirit and the most acute and penetrative senses; whence it follows that such become more easily and intensely enamoured, and also more easily and intensely disgusted, which might be through a change of the deformed spirit, which in some gesture and expressed intention reveals itself in such wise that this deformity extends from the soul to the body, and makes it appear no longer beautiful as before. The beauty, then, of the body has power to kindle, but not to bind, and the lover, unless aided by the graces of the spirit, such as purity, gratitude, courtesy, circumspection, is unable to escape. Therefore, said I, beautiful is that fire which burns me, and noble that tie which binds.

CIC. I do not believe it is always like that, Tansillo; because, sometimes, notwithstanding that we discover the spirit to be vicious, we remain heated and entangled; so that, although reason perceives the evil and unworthiness of such a love, it yet has not power to alienate the disordered appetite. In this disposition, I believe, was the Nolano when he said:

14.

> Woe's me! my fury forces me
> To union with the bad within,
> And makes it seem a love supreme and good.
> Wearied, my soul cares nought
> That I opposing counsels entertain,
> And with the savage tyrant
> Nourished with want,
> And made to put myself in exile,
> More than with liberty contented am.
> I spread my sails to the wind,
> To draw me forth from this detested bliss,

And to reclaim me from the cloying hurt.

TANS. This occurs when spirits are vicious and tinged as with the same hue; since, through conformity, love is excited, enkindled, and confirmed. Thus the vicious easily concur in acts of the same vice; and I will not refrain from repeating that which I know by experience, for although I may have discovered in a soul vices very much abominated by me—as, for instance, filthy avarice, base greediness for money, ingratitude for favours and courtesies received, or a love of quite vile persons, of which this last most displeases, because it takes away the hope from the lover, that by becoming or making himself more worthy he may become more acceptable—in spite of all this, it is true that I did burn for corporeal beauty. But how? I loved against my will; for, were it not so, I should have been more saddened than cheered by troubles and misfortunes.

CIC. It is a very proper and nice distinction that is made between loving and liking.

TANS. Truly; because we like many—that is, we desire that they be wise and just; but we love them not because they are unjust and ignorant; many we love because they are beautiful, but we do not like them, because they do not deserve it; and amongst other things of which the lover deems the loved one undeserving, the first is, being loved; and yet, although he cannot abstain from loving, nevertheless he regrets it, and shows his regret like him who said, "Woe is me! who am compelled by passion to coalesce with evil." In the opposite mood was he, either through some corporeal object in similitude or through a divine subject in reality, when he said:

15.

Although to many pains thou dost subject me,
Yet do I thank thee, love, and owe thee much,
That thou my breast dost cleave with noble wound,
And then dost take my heart and master it.
Thus true it is, that I, on earth, adore
A living object, image most beautiful of God.
Let him who will think that my fate is bad
That kills in hope and quickens in desire.
My pasture is the high emprise,
And though the end desired be not attained,
And though my soul in many thoughts is spent,

Enough that she enkindle noble fire,
Enough that she has lifted me on high,
And from the ignoble crowd has severed me.

Here his love is entirely heroic and divine, and as such, I wish it to be understood; although he says that through it he is subject to many pangs, every lover who is separated from the thing loved (to which being joined by affection he would also wish to be actually), being in anguish and pain, he torments himself, not forsooth because he loves, since he feels his love is engaged most worthily and most nobly, but because he feels deprived of that fruition which he would obtain if he arrived at that end to which he tends. He suffers, not from the desire which animates him, but from the difficulty in the cultivation of it which so tortures him. Others esteem him unhappy through this appearance of an evil destiny, as being condemned to these pangs, for he will never cease from acknowledging the obligation he is under to love, nor cease from rendering thanks to him because he has presented before the eyes of his mind such an intelligible conception through which, in this earthly life, shut in this prison of the flesh, wrapped in these nerves and supported by these bones, it is permitted to him to contemplate the divinity in a more suitable manner than if other conceptions and similitudes than these had offered themselves.

CIC. The divine and living object, then, of which he speaks, is the highest intelligible conception that he has been able to form to himself of the divinity, and is not some corporeal beauty which might overshadow his thought and appear superficially to the senses.

TANS. Even so; because no tangible thing nor conception of such can raise itself to so much dignity.

CIC. Why, then, does he mention that conception as the object, if, as appears to me, the true object is the divinity itself?

TANS. The divinity is the final object, the ultimate and most perfect, but not in this state, where we cannot see God except as in a shadow or a mirror, and therefore He cannot be the object except in some similitude, but not in such as may be extracted or acquired from corporeal beauty and excellence, by virtue of the senses, but such as may be formed in the mind, by virtue of the intellect. In which state, finding himself, he comes to lose the love and affection for every other thing senseful as well as intellectual, because this, conjoined to that light, itself also becomes light, and in consequence becomes a god: because it

contracts the divinity into itself, it being in God through the intention with which it penetrates into the divinity so far as it can, and God being in it, so that after penetrating, it comes to conceive, and so far as it can, receive and comprehend the divinity in its conception. Now in such conceptions and similitudes the human intellect of this lower world nourishes itself, till such time as it will be lawful to behold with purer eye the beauty of the divinity. As happens to him, who, absorbed in the contemplation of some elaborate architectural work, goes on examining one thing after another in it, enchanted and feeding in a wonder of delight; but if it should happen that he sees the lord of all those pictures, who is of a beauty incomparably greater, leaving all care and thought of them, he is turned intently to the examination of him. Here, then, is the difference between that state where we see divine beauty in intelligible conceptions apart from the effects, labours, works, shadows, and similitudes of it, and that other state in which it is lawful to behold it in real presence. He says: "My pasture is the high emprise," because as the Pythagoreans remark, "The soul moves and turns round God, as the body round the soul."

CIC. Then the body is not the habitation of the soul?

TANS. No; because the soul is not in the body locally, but as intrinsic form and extrinsic framer, as that which forms the limbs indicates the internal and external composition. The body, then, is in the soul, the soul in the mind, the mind either is God or is in God, as Plotinus said. As in its essence it is in God who is its life, similarly through the intellectual operation, and the will consequent upon such operation, it agrees with its bright and beatific object. Fitly, therefore, this rapture of heroic enthusiasm feeds on such "high emprise." For the object is infinite, and in action most simple, and our intellectual power cannot apprehend the infinite except in speech or in a certain manner of speech, so to say in a certain potential or relative inference, as one who proposes to himself the infinity, so that he may constitute for himself a finality where no finality is.

CIC. Fitly so, because the ultimate ought not to have an end seeing that it is ultimate. For it is infinite in intention, in perfection, in essence, and in any other manner whatsoever of being final.

TANS. Thou sayest truly. Now in this life, that food is such that excites more than it can appease, as that divine poet shows when he says: "My soul is wearied, longing for the living God," and in another place; "Attenuati sunt oculi mei suspicientes in excelsa." Therefore he says, "And though the end desired be not attained, And that my soul in many thoughts is spent, Enough that she enkindle

noble fire:" meaning to say that the soul comforts itself, and receives all the glory which it is able in that state to receive, and that it is a participator in that ultimate enthusiasm of man, in so far as he is a man in this present condition, as we see him.

CIC. It appears to me that the Peripatetics, as explained by Averroes, mean this, when they say that the highest felicity of man consists in perfection through the speculative sciences.

TANS. It is true, and they say well; because we, in this state, cannot desire nor obtain greater perfection than that in which we are, when our intellect, by means of some noble and intelligible conception, unites itself either to the substance of things hoped for, as those say, or to the divine mind, as it is the fashion to say of the Platonists. For the present, I will leave reasoning about the soul, or man in another state or mode of being than he can find himself or believe himself to be in.

CIC. But what perfection or satisfaction can man find in that knowledge which is not perfect?

TANS. It will never be perfect, so far as understanding the highest object is concerned; but in so far as our intellect can understand it. Let it suffice that in this and other states there be present to him the divine beauty so far as the horizon of his vision extends.

CIC. But all men cannot arrive at that, which one or two may reach.

TANS. Let it suffice that all "run well," and that each does his utmost, for the heroic nature is content and shows its dignity rather in falling, or in failing worthily in the high undertaking, in which it shows the dignity of its spirit, than in succeeding to perfection in lower and less noble things.

CIC. Truly a dignified and heroic death is better than a mean, low triumph.

TANS. On that theme I made this sonnet:

16.

> Since I have spread my wings to my desire,
> The more I feel the air beneath my feet,
> So much the more towards the wind I bend
> My swiftest pinions,

And spurn the world and up towards heaven I go.
Not the sad fate of Daedalus's son
Does warn me to turn downwards,
But ever higher will I rise.
Well do I see, I shall fall dead to earth;
But what life is there can compare with this my death?
Out on the air my heart's voice do I hear:
"Whither dost thou carry me, thou fearless one?
Turn back. Such over-boldness rarely grief escapes."
"Fear not the utmost ruin then," I said,
"Cleave confident the clouds and die content,
That heaven has destined thee to such illustrious death."

CIC. I understand when you say: "Enough that thou hast lifted me on high;" but not: "And from the ignoble crowd hast severed me;" unless it means his having come out from the Platonic groove on account of the stupid and low condition of the crowd; for those that find profit in this contemplation cannot be numerous.

TANS. Thou understandest well; but thou mayst also understand, by the "ignoble crowd," the body, and sensual cognition, from which he must arise and free himself who would unite with a nature of a contrary kind.

CIC. The Platonists say there are two kinds of knots which link the soul to the body. One is a certain vivifying action which from the soul descends into the body, like a ray; the other is a certain vital quality, which is produced from that action in the body. Now this active and most noble number, which is the soul, in what way do you understand that it may be severed from the ignoble number, which is the body?

TANS. Certainly it was not understood according to any of these modes, but according to that mode whereby those powers which are not comprehended and imprisoned in the womb of matter, sometimes as if inebriated and stupefied, find that they also are occupied in the formation of matter and in the vivification of the body; then, as if awakened and brought to themselves, recognizing its principle and genius, they turn towards superior things and force themselves on the intelligible world as to their native abode, and from thence, through their conversion to inferior things, they are thrust into the fate and conditions of generation. These two impulses are symbolized in the two kinds of metamorphosis expressed in the following:

17.

That god who shakes the sounding thunder,
Asteria as a furtive eagle saw;
Mnemosyne as shepherd; Danae gold;
Alcmene as a fish; Antiope a goat;
Cadmus and his sister a white bull;
Leda as swan, and Dolida as dragon;
And through the lofty object I become,
From subject viler still, a god.
A horse was Saturn;
And in a calf and dolphin Neptune dwelt;
Ibis and shepherd Mercury became;
Bacchus a grape; Apollo was a crow;
And I by help of love,
From an inferior thing, do change me to a god.

In Nature is one revolution and one circle, by means of which, for the perfection and help of others, superior things lower themselves to things inferior, and, by their own excellence and felicity, inferior things raise themselves to superior ones. Therefore the Pythagoreans and Platonists say it is given to the soul that at certain times, not only by spontaneous will, which turns it towards the comprehension of Nature, but also by the necessity of an internal law, written and registered by the destined decree, they seek their own justly determined fate; and they also say that souls, not so much by determination of their own will as through a certain order, by which they become inclined towards matter, decline as rebels from divinity; wherefore, not by free intention, but by a certain occult consequence, they fall. And this is the inclination that they have to generation, as towards a minor good. Minor, I say, in so far as it appertains to that particular nature; not in so far as it appertains to the universal nature, where nothing happens without the highest aim, and which disposes of all things according to justice. In which generation finding themselves once more through the changes which permutably succeed, they return again to the superior forms.

CIC. So that they mean, that souls are impelled by the necessity of fate, and have no proper counsel which guides them at all.

TANS. Necessity, fate, nature, counsel, will, those things, justly and rightfully ordained, all agree in one. Besides which, as Plotinus relates, some believe that certain souls can escape from their own evil, if knowing the danger, they seek

refuge in the mind before the corporeal habit is confirmed; because the mind raises to things sublime, as the imagination lowers to inferior things. The mind always understands one, as the imagination is one in movement and in diversity; the mind always understands one, as the imagination is always inventing for itself various images. In the midst is the rational faculty, which is a mixture of all, like that in which the one agrees with the many, sameness with variety, movement with fixedness, the inferior with the superior. Now these transmutations and conversions are symbolized in the wheel of metamorphosis, where man sits on the upper part, a beast lies at the bottom, a half-man, half-beast descends from the left, and a half-beast, half-man ascends from the right. This transmutation is shown where Jove, according to the diversity of the affections and the behaviour of those towards inferior things, invests himself with divers figures, entering into the form of beasts; and so also the other gods transmigrate into base and alien forms. And, on the contrary, through the knowledge of their own nobility, they re-take their own divine form; as the passionate hero, raising himself through conceived kinds of divine beauty and goodness, with the wings of the intellect and rational will, rises to the divinity, leaving the form of the lower subject. And therefore he said, "I become from subject viler still, a god. From an inferior thing do change me to a god."

Fourth Dialogue.

TANSILLO.

Thus is described the discourse of heroic love, in all which tends to its own object, which is the highest good; and heroic intellect, which devotes itself to the study of its own object, which is the primal verity, or absolute truth. Now the first discourse holds the sum of this and the intention, the order of which is described in five others following:

18.

To the woods, the mastiffs and the greyhounds young Actæon
leads,
When destiny directs him into the doubtful and neglected way,
Upon the track of savage beasts in forests wild.
And here, between the waters, he sees a bust and face more

beautiful than e'er was seen
By mortal or divine, of scarlet, alabaster, and fine gold;
He sees, and the great hunter straight becomes that which he hunts.
The stag, that towards still thicker shades now goes with lighter steps,
His own great dogs swiftly devour.
So I extend my thoughts to higher prey, and these
Now turning on me give me death with cruel savage bite.

Actæon signifies the intellect, intent on the pursuit of divine wisdom and the comprehension of divine beauty. He lets loose the mastiffs and the greyhounds, of whom the latter are more swift and the former more strong, because the operation of the intellect precedes that of the will; but this is more vigorous and effectual than that; seeing that, to the human intellect, divine goodness and beauty are more loveable than comprehensible, and love it is that moves and urges the intellect, and precedes it as a lantern. The woods, uncultivated and solitary places, visited and penetrated by few, and where there are few traces of men. The youth of little skill and practice, as of one of short life and of wavering enthusiasm. In the doubtful road of uncertain and distorted reason—a disposition assigned to the character of Pythagoras—where you see the most thorny, uncultivated, and deserted to be the right and difficult path, where he lets loose the greyhounds and the mastiffs upon the track of savage beasts, that is, the intelligible kinds of ideal conceptions, which are occult, followed by few, visited but rarely, and which do not disclose themselves to all those who seek them. Here, amongst the waters,—that is, in the mirror of similitude, in those works where shines the brightness of divine goodness and splendour, which works are symbolized by the waters superior and inferior, which are above and below the firmament, he sees the most beautiful bust and face—that is, external power and operation, which it is possible to see, by the habit and act of contemplation and the application of mortal or divine mind, of man or any god.

CIC. I do not believe that he makes a comparison, nor puts as the same kind the divine and the human mode of comprehending, which are very diverse, but as to the subject they are the same.

TANS. So it is. He says "of red and alabaster and gold," because that which in bodily beauty is red, white, and fair, in divinity signifies the scarlet of divine vigorous power, the gold of divine wisdom, the alabaster of divine beauty,

through the contemplation of which the Pythagoreans, Chaldeans, Platonists, and others, strive in the best way that they can to elevate themselves. "The great hunter saw," he understood as much as was possible, and became the hunted. He went out for prey, and this hunter became himself the prey, by the operation of the intellect converting the things learned into itself.

CIC. I understand. He forms intelligible conceptions in his own way and proportions them to his capacity, so that they are received according to the manner of the recipient.

TANS. And does he hunt through the operation of the will, by the act of which he converts himself into the object?

CIC. As I understand: because love transforms and converts into the thing loved.

TANS. Well dost thou know that the intellect learns things intelligibly—*i.e.*, in its own way, and the will pursues things naturally, that is, according to the reason that is in themselves. So Actæon with those thoughts—those dogs—which hunted outside themselves for goodness, wisdom, and beauty, thus came into the presence of the same, and ravished out of himself by so much splendour, he became the prey, saw himself converted into that for which he was seeking, and perceived, that of his dogs or thoughts, he himself came to be the longed-for prey; for having absorbed the divinity into himself it was not necessary to search outside himself for it.

CIC. For this reason it is said "the kingdom of Heaven is in us;" divinity dwells within through the reformed intellect and will.

TANS. It is so. See then, Actæon hunted by his own dogs—pursued by his own thoughts—runs and directs these novel paces, invigorated so as to proceed divinely and "more easily," that is, with greater facility and with refreshed vigour "towards the denser places," to the deserts and the region of things incomprehensible. From being such as he first was, a common ordinary man, he becomes rare and heroic, his habits and ideas are strange, and he leads an unusual life. Here his great dogs "give him death," and thus ends his life according to the mad, sensual, blind, and fantastic world, and he begins to live intellectually; he lives the life of the gods, fed on ambrosia and drunk with nectar.

Next we see under the form of another similitude the manner in which he arms himself to obtain the object. He says:

19.

My solitary bird! away unto that region
Which overshadows and which occupies my thought,
Go swiftly, and there nestle; there every
Need of thine be strengthened,
There all thy industry and art be spent!
There be thou born again, and there on high,
Gather and train up thy wandering fledglings
Since adverse fate has drawn away the bars
With which she ever sought to block thy way.
Go! I desire for thee a nobler dwelling-place,
And thou shalt have for guide a god,
Who is called blind by him who nothing sees.
Go! and ever be by thee revered,
Each deity of that wide sphere,
And come not back to me till thou art mine.

The progress symbolized above by the hunter who excites his dogs, is here illustrated by a winged heart, which is sent out of the cage, in which it lived idle and quiet, to make its nest on high and bring up its fledglings, its thoughts, the time being come in which those impediments are removed, which were caused, externally, in a thousand different ways, and internally by natural feebleness. He dismisses his heart then to make more magnificent surroundings, urging him to the highest propositions and intentions, now that those powers of the soul are more fully fledged, which Plato signifies by the two wings, and he commits him to the guidance of that god, who, by the unseeing crowd, is considered insane and blind, that is Love, who, by the mercy and favour of heaven, has power to transform him into that nature towards which he aspires, or into that state from which, a pilgrim, he is banished. Whence he says, "Come not back to me till thou art mine," and not unworthily may I say with that other—

Thou has left me, oh, my heart,
And thou, light of my eyes, art no more with me.

Here he describes the death of the soul, which by the Kabbalists is called the death by kisses, symbolized in the Song of Solomon, where the friend says:

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,

For, when he wounds me,
I suffer with a cruel love.

By others it is called sleep; the Psalmist says:

It shall be, that I give sleep unto mine eyes,
And mine eyelids shall slumber,
And I shall have in him peaceful repose.

The soul then is said to be faint, because it is dead in itself, and alive in the object:

20.

Give heed, enthusiasts, unto the heart!
For mine condemns me to a life apart,
Bound by unmerciful and cruel ties,
He dwells with joy, there where he faints and dies.
At every hour I call him back by thoughts:
A rebel he, like gerfalcon insane,
He feels no more the hand that did restrain,
And is gone forth not to return again.
Thou beauteous beast that dost in punishment
Knit up the soul, spirit and heart content'st
With pricks, with lightnings, and with chains!
From looks, from accents, and from usages,
Which faint and burn and keep thee bound,
Where shall he that heals, that cools, and loosens thee be found?

Here the soul, sorrowful, not from real discontent, but on account of pains which she suffers, directs the discourse to those who are affected by passions similar to her own: as if she had not of her own free will and of her own desire dismissed her heart, which goes running whither it cannot arrive, stretches out to that which it cannot reach, and tries to enfold that which it cannot comprehend, and with this, because he vainly separates from her, ever more and more goes on aspiring towards the infinite.

CIC. Whence comes it, oh Tansillo, that the soul in such progression delights in its own torments? Whence comes that spur which urges it ever beyond that which it possesses?

TANS. From this, which I will tell thee now. The intellect being developed to the comprehension of a certain definite and specific form, and the will to a love commensurate with such comprehension; the intellect does not stop there, but by its own light it is prompted to think of this: that it contains within itself the germ of everything intelligible and desirable, until it comes to comprehend with the intellect the depth of the fountain of ideas, the ocean of every truth and goodness. So that it happens, that whatever conception is presented to the mind, and becomes understood by it, from that which is so presented and comprehended it judges, that above it, is other greater and greater, and finds itself ever in a certain way discoursing and moving with it. Because it sees that all which it possesses is only a limited thing, and therefore cannot be sufficient of itself, nor good of itself, nor beautiful of itself; because it is not the universal nor the absolute entity; but contracted into being this nature, this species, this form, represented to the intellect and present to the soul. Then from the beautiful that is understood, and consequently limited, and therefore beautiful through participation, it progresses towards that which is really beautiful, which has no margin, nor any boundaries.

CIC. This progression appears to me useless.

TANS. Not so. For it is not natural nor suitable that the infinite be restricted, nor give itself definitely, for it would not then be infinite. To be infinite, it must be infinitely pursued with that form of pursuit which is not incited physically, but metaphysically, and is not from imperfect to perfect, but goes circulating through the grades of perfection to arrive at that infinite centre which is not form, and is not formed.

CIC. I should like to know how, by circumambulating, one is to arrive at the centre?

TANS. I cannot know that.

CIC. Why do you say it?

TANS. I can say it, and leave it to you to consider.

CIC. If you do not mean that he who pursues the infinite is like him who talks about the circumference when he is seeking for the centre, I do not know what you mean.

TANS. Quite the contrary.

CIC. Now if you will not explain yourself, I cannot understand you; but tell me, prythee, what he means by saying the heart is bound by cruel, spiteful bonds.

TANS. He speaks in similitude or metaphor; as you would say, cruel was one who did not allow a full enjoyment, and who lives more in the desire than in possession, and who, partially possessing, is not content, but desires, faints, and dies.

CIC. What are those thoughts that call him back from the noble enterprise?

TANS. The sensual and natural affections, which regard the government of the body.

CIC. What have they to do with it, that in no way can either help or favour it?

TANS. They have not to do with it, but with the soul, which, being so absorbed in one work or study, becomes remiss and careless in others.

CIC. Why does he call him insane?

TANS. Because he surpasses in knowledge.

CIC. It is usual to call insane those who know nothing.

TANS. On the contrary. Those are called insane who know not in the ordinary way, or who rise above the ordinary from having more intellect.

CIC. I perceive that thou sayest truly. Now tell me what are the pricks, the lightnings, and the chains?

TANS. Pricks are those experiences that stimulate and awaken the affection, to make it on the alert; lightnings are the rays of the present beauty, which enlighten those who watch and wait for them; chains are those effects and circumstances which keep fixed the eyes of attention and unite together the object and the powers.

CIC. What are the looks, the accents, and the customs?

TANS. Looks are the means by which the object is made present to us; accents are the means through which we are inspired and informed; customs are the circumstances which are most pleasant and agreeable to us. So that the heart that gently suffers, patiently burns and constantly perseveres in the work, fears that its hurt will heal, its fire be extinguished, and its bands be loosened.

CIC. Now relate that which follows.

TANS.:

21.

Lofty, profound, and stirring thoughts of mine,
Ye long to sever the maternal ties
Of the afflicted soul, and like to proud
And able bowmen, draw at the mark,
Which is the germ of all your high conceits.
In those steep paths where cruel beasts may be,
Let not heaven leave ye!
Remember to return, and summon back
The heart that tarries with the wild wood nymph;
Arm ye with love,
Warm with the flame of domesticity,
And with strong repression guard thy sight,
That strangers keep thee not companioned with my heart;
At least bring news of that,
Which unto him is such delight and joy.

Here he describes the natural solicitude of the attentive soul on the subject, of its inclination towards generation, which it has contracted with matter. She dispatches the armed thoughts, which, solicited and urged by disagreement with the inferior nature, are sent to recall the heart. The soul instructs them how they should conduct themselves, so that, being allured and attracted by the object, they do not become induced to remain, they also, captive and companions of the heart. She says, then, they are to arm themselves with love, with that love that is fired by the domestic flame; that is, the friend of generation, to whom they are bound, and in whose jurisdiction, ministry, and warfare they find themselves. Anon she orders them to repress their eyesight and to close their eyes, so that they may not behold other beauty or goodness than that which is present, friend and mother; and concludes at last with this, that if no other reason will cause them to return, they should at least do so, to give account of the discourse and of the state of the heart.

CIC. Before you proceed further, I would understand from you what is that which the soul means when she tells the thoughts to repress the sight vigorously.

TANS. I will tell thee. All love proceeds from seeing: intelligent love, from seeing intelligently; sensuous love, from seeing sensuously. Now this seeing has two meanings: either it means the visual power, that is the sight, which is the intellect, or truly the sense; or it means the act of that power, that is, that application which the eye or the intellect makes to the material or intellectual

object. When the thoughts are counselled to repress the sight, it is not the first, but the second, mode that is meant, because that is the father of the subsequent affection of the sensuous or intellectual desire.

CIC. This is what I wished to hear from you. Now, if the act of the visual power is the cause of the evil or good which proceed from seeing, whence comes it that in things divine we have more love than knowledge?

TANS. We desire to see, because in some way we perceive the value of seeing. We are aware that, through the act of seeing, beautiful things offer themselves to us; and therefore we desire beautiful things.

CIC. We desire the beautiful and the good; but seeing is not beautiful nor good; rather is it the touchstone or light by which we see, not only the beautiful and good, but also the evil and bad. Therefore it seems to me that seeing may be equally beautiful or good, as the thing seen may be white or black. If, then, the sight, which is an act, is not beautiful nor good, how can it fall into desire?

TANS. If not for itself, yet certainly for some other reason, it is desired, seeing that there can be no apprehension of that other without it.

CIC. What wilt thou say, if that other is not within the knowledge of the senses nor of the intellect? How, I say, can that be desired which is not seen, if there is no knowledge whatever of it—if towards it neither the intellect nor the sense has exercised any act whatever; but, on the contrary, it is even dubious whether it be intellectual or sensuous, whether a thing corporeal or incorporeal, whether it be one or two or more, or of one fashion or of another?

TANS. I answer, that in the sense and the intellect there is one desire and one impulse to the sensuous in general; because the intellect will hear the whole truth, so that it may learn all that is beautiful or good intelligently; the power of the senses will inform itself of all that is sensuous, so that it may know all that is good and beautiful in the world of the senses. Hence it follows that not less do we desire to see things unknown and unseen than those known and seen. And from this it does not follow that the desire does not proceed from cognition, and that we desire something that is not known; but I say that it is certain and sure that we do not desire unknown things. Because, if they be occult as to particulars, they are not occult as to generals; as in the entire visual power is found the whole of the visible appositely, and in the intellect all the intelligible. Therefore, as the inclination to the act lies in its appropriateness, the result is that both these powers incline towards the universal action, as to a thing naturally

comprehended as good. The soul, then, did not speak to the deaf or the blind when she counselled her thoughts to repress the sight, which, although it may not be the immediate cause of the will, is yet the primal and principal cause.

CIC. What do you mean by this last saying?

TANS. I mean that it is not the figure or the conception, sensibly or intelligently represented, which of itself moves us; because while one stands beholding the figure manifested to the eyes, he does not yet arrive at loving; but from that instant that the soul conceives within itself that figure, not visible, but thinkable; no longer dividual, but individual; no longer classed among things in general, but among things good and beautiful; then immediately love is born. Now this is the seeing, from which the soul desires to divert the eyes of her thoughts. Here the sight usually moves the affection to a greater love than the love of that which is seen; for, as I have just said, it always considers, through the universal knowledge that it holds of the beautiful and the good, that, besides the degrees of known conceptions of goodness and beauty, there are others and yet others *ad infinitum*.

CIC. How is it that after we become informed of that conception of the beautiful which is begotten in the soul, we yet desire to satisfy the exterior vision?

TANS. From this, that the soul would ever love that which it loves, and ever see that which it sees. Therefore she wills that, the conception which has been produced in her through seeing, should not become weakened, enervated and lost; but would ever see more and more, and that which becomes obscure in the interior affection, should be frequently brightened by the exterior aspect, which as it is the principle of being, must also be the principle of conservation. This results proportionately in the act of understanding and of considering, for as the sight has reference to visible things, so has the intellect to intelligible things. I believe now that you understand to what end and in what manner the soul tends, when she says "repress the sight."

CIC. I understand very well. Now continue to unfold what happens to these thoughts.

TANS. Now follows the disagreement between the mother and the aforesaid children, who having, contrary to her orders, opened their eyes, and, having fixed them on the splendour of the object, they remained in company with the heart.

22.

> Cruel sons are ye to me, me whom ye left
> Still farther to exasperate my pain;
> And ever without cease ye weary me,
> Taking away from me my every hope!
> Why should the sense remain? oh, grasping heavens!
> Wherefore these broken ruined powers, if not
> To make me subject and exemplar
> Of such heavy martyrdom, such lengthened pain?
> Leave, dear sons, my winged fire enchained,
> And let me, some of you once more behold,
> Come back to me from those retaining claws!
> Oh, weariness! not one returns
> To bring a late refreshment to my pains.

Behold me, miserable one, deprived of heart, abandoned of thoughts, left by hope, I, who had fixed my all in them. Nothing is left to me but the sense of my poverty, my unhappiness and misery; why does not this too leave me? Why does not death succour me, now that I am deprived of life? To what use do I possess these natural powers if I be deprived of the use of them? How can I alone nourish myself with intelligible conceptions as with intellectual bread, if the substance of this bread be composed of this contingency. How can I linger in the intimacy of these friendly and dear members which I have woven round me, adjusting them with the symmetry of the elementary conditions, if my thoughts and all my affections abandon me, intent upon the care of the bread that is immaterial and divine? Up, up; oh my flying thoughts; up, oh my rebel heart; let live the sense of things that are felt, and the understanding of things intelligible, come to the succour of the body with matter and corporeal subject, and let the understanding delight in its own objects, to the end that this composition of the body may be realized, that this machine dissolve not, in which, by means of the spirit, the soul is united to the body. Why, unhappy as I am (more through domestic circumstances than through external violence), am I doomed to see this horrible divorce between my parts and members? Why does the intellect trouble itself to give laws to the sense and yet deprive it of its food? and this, on the other hand, resists; desiring to live according to its own decrees, and not according to the decree of others; for these and not those are able to maintain and bless it, therefore it ought to attend to its own comfort and life, and not to that of others. There is no harmony and concord where there is only one, where

one individual absorbs the whole being, but where there is order and analogy in things diverse; where each thing serves its own nature. Therefore let the sense feed according to the law of things that can be felt, the flesh be obedient to the law of the spirit, the reason to its own law. Let them not be confounded nor mixed. Enough that one neither mar nor prejudice the law of the other, since it is not just that the sense outrage the law of reason. And verily it is a shameful thing that one should tyrannize over the other, particularly where the intellect is a pilgrim and strange, and the sense is more domesticated and at home. I am forced by you, my thoughts, to remain at home in charge of the house, while others may wander wherever they will. This is a law of Nature, and therefore a law of the author and originator of Nature. Sin on then, now that all of you, seduced by the charm of the intellect, leave the other part of me to the peril of death. How have you gotten this melancholy and perverse humour, which breaks the certain and natural laws of the true life, and which is in your own hands, for one, uncertain, and which has no existence except in shadow, beyond the limits of fantastic thought? Seems it to you a natural thing that they should live divinely and not as animals and humanly, they being not gods, but men and animals? It is a law of fate and Nature that everything should adapt itself to the condition of its own being, wherefore then, while you follow after the niggard nectar of the gods, do you lose that which is present and is your own, and trouble yourself about the vain hopes of others? Ought not Nature to refuse to give you the other good, if that which she at present offers to you, you stupidly despise?

> Heaven the second gift denies,
> To him who does the first despise.

With these and similar reasons the soul, taking part with the weakest, seeks to recall the thoughts to the care of the body. And these, although late, come and show themselves, but not in that form in which they departed, but only to declare their rebellion, and force her to follow. And the sorrowing one thus laments:

23.

> Ah, dogs of Actæon, ah, proud ingrates!
> Whom to the abode of my divinity I sent;
> Without hope do ye return to me;
> And, coming to the mother's side, ye bring
> Back unto me a too unhappy boon;
> Ye mangle me, and will that I live not.

Leave me, life, that I may mount up to my sun,
A double streamlet, mad, without my fount!
When shall this ponderous mass of me dissolve?
When shall it be, that, taking myself hence,
And swiftly rising to the heights above,
Together with my heart I may abide,
And with my thoughts I may be deified?

The Platonists say that the soul, as to its superior part, always consists in the intellect, in which it has more of understanding than of soul, seeing that it is called soul only in so far as it vivifies the body and sustains it. So here, the same essence which nourishes and maintains the thoughts on high, together with the exalted heart, is induced by the inferior part to afflict itself, and recall them as rebels.

CIC. So that they are not two contrary existences, but one, subject to two contradictory terms?

TANS. So it is, precisely. As the ray of the sun which touches the earth, and is joined to obscure and to inferior things, which it brightens, vivifies, and kindles, and is then joined to the element of fire—that is, to the star, whence it proceeds, and has its beginning, and is diffused, and in which it has its own and original subsistence—so the soul, which is in the horizon of Nature, is corporeal and incorporeal, and contains that with which it rises to superior things and declines to things inferior. And this, you may perceive, does not happen by reason and order of local motion, but solely through the impulse of one and of another power or faculty. As when the sense rises to the imagination, the imagination to the reason, the reason to the intellect, the intellect to the mind, then the whole soul is converted into God, and inhabits the intelligible world; whence, on the other hand, she descends in an inverse manner to the world of feeling, through the intellect, reason, imagination, sense, vegetation.

CIC. It is true that I have heard that the soul, in order to put itself in the ultimate degree of divine things, descends into the mortal body, and from this goes up again to the divine degrees, which are three degrees of intelligence. For there are others in which the intellectual surpasses the animal, which are said to be the celestial intelligences; and others in which the animal surpasses the intellectual, which are the human intelligences; others there are, of which those things are equal, as those of demons or heroes.

TANS. The mind then cannot desire except that which is near, close, known, and familiar. The pig cannot desire to be a man, nor wish for those things that are suitable to the human appetite. He likes better to turn about in mud than in a bed of linen, he would prefer a sow to the most beautiful of women, because the affection follows the reason of the species. And amongst men the same thing is seen, according as some resemble one species of brute beast and some another: these having something of the quadruped, and those of birds, and, may be, some affinity, which I will not explain, but through which those have been known who are affected by certain sorts of beasts. Now, it is lawful for the mind which finds itself oppressed by the material conjunction of the soul, to raise itself to the contemplation of another state, to which the soul may arrive, comparing the two, and so through the future despise the present. If a beast had a sense of the difference which exists between his own condition and that of man, and the meanness of his own state with the nobility of the human state, which he would deem it not impossible to be able to reach, he would love death, which would open to him that road, more than that life which keeps him in the present state of being. When the soul complains, saying, "Ah! dogs of Actæon!" she is represented as a thing which appears only in the inferior powers, and against which the mind rebels for having taken away the heart with it; that is to say, the entire affections, with all the army of the thoughts. So that, having a knowledge of the present state, and being ignorant of every other, and not believing that others exist about which she can have any knowledge, she complains of her thoughts, which, tardily turning towards her, come rather to draw her up than to make themselves accepted by her. And through the distraction which she endures on account of the ordinary love of the material and of things intelligible, she feels herself lacerated and mangled, so that at last she is forced to yield to the more vigorous impulse. And if, by virtue of contemplation, she rises or is caught up above the horizon of the natural affections, whence with purer eye she learns the difference between the one life and the other, then, vanquished by the lofty thoughts, and, as if dead to the body, she aspires to that which is elevated, and, although alive in the body, she vegetates there as if dead, being present as an animating principle and absent in operative activity; not because she does not act while the body is alive, but that the actions of this mass are intermittent, weak, and, as it were, purposeless.

CIC. Thus a certain theologian, who was said to be transported to the third heaven and enchanted with the view of it, said that what he desired was the dissolution of his body.

TANS. So; first complaining of the heart and quarrelling with the thoughts, she now desires to rise on high with them, and exhibits her regret for the connection and familiarity contracted with corporeal matter, and says: "Leave me life (corporeal), and do not impede my progress upwards to my native home, to my sun. Leave me now, for no longer do my eyes weep tears; neither because I cannot succour them (the thoughts), nor because I cannot remain divided from my happiness. Leave me, for it is not fit nor possible that these two streams should run without their source, that is, without the heart. I will not, I say, make two rivers of tears here below, while my heart, which is the source of such rivers, is flown away on high with its nymphs, which are my thoughts." Thus, little by little, from dislike and regret, she proceeds to the hatred of inferior things, which she partly shows, saying, "When shall this ponderous mass of me dissolve?" and that which follows.

CIC. This I understand right well, and also that which you would infer about the principal intention; that is to say, that these are the degrees of the loves, of the affections, and of the enthusiasms, according to the degrees of greater and lesser light, of cognition, and of intelligence.

TANS. Thou understandest rightly. From this thou oughtest to learn that doctrine taken from the Pythagoreans and Platonists, which is, that the soul makes the two progressions of ascent and descent, by the care that it has of itself and of matter; being moved by its own proper love of good, and being urged by the providence of fate.

CIC. But, prythee, tell me briefly what you mean about the soul of the world, if she can neither ascend nor descend?

TANS. If you ask of the world, according to the common signification—that is, in so far as it signifies what is called the universe—I say that, being infinite, it has no dimension or measure, is immobile, inanimate, and without form, notwithstanding it is the place of infinite moving worlds and is infinite space, in which are so many large animals that are called stars. If you ask according to the signification held by the true philosophers—that is, in so far as it signifies every globe, every star, such as this earth, the body of the sun, moon, and others—I say that such soul does not ascend nor descend, but turns in a circle. Thus, being compounded of superior and inferior powers, with the superior it turns round the divinity, and with the inferior, towards the mass of the worlds, which is by it vivified and maintained between the tropics of generation and the corruption of living things in those worlds, serving its own life eternally; because the act of the

divine providence, always preserves it with divine heat and light, with the same order and measure, in the ordinary and self-same being.

CIC. I have now heard enough upon this subject.

TANS. It happens then that individual souls come to be influenced differently as to their habits and inclinations, according to the diverse degrees of ascension and descension, and come to display various kinds and orders of enthusiasms, of loves, and of senses, not only in the scale of Nature according to the orders of diverse lives which the soul takes up in different bodies, as is expressly declared by the Pythagoreans, Saduchimi and others, and by implication, Plato, and those who dive more profoundly into it, but still more in the scale of human affections, which has as many degrees as the scale of Nature; for man, in all his powers, displays every species of being.

CIC. Therefore from the affections one may know souls, whether they are going up or down, or whether they are from above or from below, whether they are going on towards becoming beasts or towards divine beings, according to the specific being as the Pythagoreans understood it; or according to the similitude of the affections only, as is commonly believed, the human soul not being able, (so long as it is truly human) to become soul of a brute, as Plotinus and other Platonists well said, on account of the quality of its beginning.

TANS. Now to come to the proposition: From animal enthusiasm, this soul, as described, is promoted to heroic enthusiasm, saying, "When shall it be that I rise up to the height of the object, there to dwell in company with my heart and with my fledglings[A] and his?" This same proposition he continues when he says:

24.

> Destiny, when, shall I that mountain mount,
> Which, blissful to the high gates bringing, bring,
> Where those rare beauties I shall counting, count,
> When *he* my pain with comfort comforting,
> Who my disjointed members joined,
> And leaves my dying powers not dead?
> My spirit's rival more than rivalled is
> If, far from sin, it unassailed may sail,
> If thither tending, it may waiting, wait,
> And up with that high object rising, rise,
> And if my good alone, alone I take,

For which I sure remove of each defect effect,
And so at last may come to enjoy with joy,
As he who all foretells can tell.

[A] Pulcini.

O Destiny! O Fate! O divine immutable Providence! when shall it be that I shall climb that mount—that is, that I may arrive at such altitude of mind, as transporting me shall bring me into those outer and inner courts where I may behold and count those rare beauties? When shall it be, that he will effectually comfort my pain, loosening me from the tightened bonds of those cares in which I find myself, he, who formed and united my members, which before were disunited and disjoined: that is Love; he who has joined together these corporeal parts, which were as far divided as one opposite is divided from another; so that these intellectual powers which, through his action he has extinguished, should not be left quite dead, but be again re-animated and made to aspire on high? When, I say, will he fully comfort me, and give my powers free and speedy flight, by which means my substance may go and nestle there, where, by my efforts, I may make amends and correct my defects, and where (if I arrive) my spirit will be made effectual or prevail over my rival, because there, no excess will oppose, no opposition overcome, no error assail? Oh! if by force he may arrive there, at that height which he is waiting to reach, he will remain on high, at the elevation of his object, and he will take that good that cannot be comprehended by any other than one, that is, by himself, seeing that every other has it in the measure of his own capacity, and this one alone has it in all its fulness. Then will happiness come to me in that manner which he says, "who all foretells"; that is, at that elevation in which the saying all and the doing all is the same thing; in that manner that he says and does who all foretells, that is, who is sufficient for all things and primary, and whose word and pre-ordaining is the true doing and beginning. This is how, in the scale of things superior and inferior, the affection of Love proceeds, as the intellect or sentiment proceeds from these intelligible or knowable objects, to those, or from those to these.

CIC. Thus the greater number of sages believe that Nature delights in this changeful circulation which is seen in the whirling of her wheel.

Fifth Dialogue.

I.

CIC. Now show me how I may be able for myself to consider the conditions of these enthusiasts, through that which appears in the order of the warfare here described.

TANS. Behold how they carry the ensign of their affections or fortunes. Let us leave the consideration of their names and habits; enough that we stand upon the meaning of the undertaking and the intelligibility of the writing, alike that which is put for the form of the body of the figure, as well as that which is mostly put as an elucidation of the undertaking.

CIC. Thus will we do. Here then is the first, who carries a shield divided into four colours, and in the crest is depicted a flame under the head of bronze, from the holes in which, issue in great force a smoky wind, and about it is written: "At regna senserunt tria."

TANS. For the explanation of this I would say: that the fire there is that which heats the globe, inside of it is the water, and it happens that this humid element, being rarefied and attenuated by virtue of the heat, and thus resolved into vapour, it requires much greater space to contain it, therefore if it does not find easy exit, it goes on with extreme force, noise, and destruction to break the vessel; but if it finds space and easy exit, so that it can evaporate, it goes out with less violence, little by little, and, according as the water is resolved into vapour, it is dissipated in puffs into the air. Here is signified the heart of the enthusiast where, by a cleverly planned allurement being caught by the amorous flame, it happens that some of the vital substance sparkles with fire, while some in the form of tearful cries rends the bosom, and some other by the expulsion of gusty sighs agitates the air. Therefore he says: "At regna senserunt tria." Now this "at" supposes a difference, or diversity, or opposite; as one might almost say there exists something which might have the same sense, but has it not, which is very well explained in the following rhymes:

25.

> From these twin lights of me—a little earth—
> My wonted tears stream freely to the sea.
> The greedy air receives from out my breast
> No niggard part of all that breast contains;
> And from my heart the lightnings are unlocked
> That rise to heaven, and yet diminish not.

Thus pay I to the air, the sea, the fire,
The tribute of my sighs, my tears, my zeal.
The sea, the air, the fire, accept a part of me,
But my divinity no favour shows.
Unkind she turns away. Near her
My tears find no response;
My voice she will not hear,
Nor pitifully will she turn to note my zeal.

Here the subject matter signified by "earth" is the substance of the enthusiast, which is poured from the twin lights—that is, from the eyes—in copious tears that flow to the sea; he sends forth from his breast into the wide air sighs in a great multitude, and the lightnings from his heart, not like a little spark or a weak flame, which, cooling itself in the air, smokes, and transmigrates into other beings; but, potent and vigorous—rather acquiring from others than losing of its own—it joins its congenial sphere.

CIC. I understand it all. To the next.

II.

TANS. Close by is portrayed one who has on his shield a crest, also divided into four colours. There is a sun whose rays extend to the back of the earth, and there is a legend which says: "Idem semper ubique totum."

CIC. I perceive that the interpretation of it will be difficult.

TANS. The more excellent the meaning the less obvious is it, and you will see that it is unequalled, unique, and not strained. You are to consider that the sun, although with regard to the various regions of the earth he is for each one different as to time, place, and degree, yet in respect of the whole globe as such, he always and in every place accomplishes everything, for in whatever part of the ecliptic he is to be found, he makes winter, summer, autumn, and spring, and makes the whole globe of the earth to receive within itself the aforesaid four seasons; for never is it hot at one side unless it is cold on the other; when it is to us very hot in the tropic of Cancer it is very cold in the tropic of Capricorn; so that for the same reason it is winter in that part when it is summer in this, and to those who are in the middle, it is temperate according to the aspect, vernal or autumnal. So the earth always feels the rains, the winds, the heat, the cold; nor would it be damp here if it were not dry in another part, and the sun would not warm it on this side if it had not already left off warming it on the other.

CIC. Even before you have finished, I understand what you would say. You mean that as the sun gives all the impressions to the earth, and this receives them whole and entire, so the Object of the enthusiast, with its active splendour, makes him the passive subject of tears, which are the waters, of ardours, which are the fires, and of sighs, which are certain vapours, which partake of both, which leave the fire, and go to the waters, or leave the waters and go to the fire.

TANS. This is well explained below.

26.

> When as the sun towards Capricorn declines,
> Then do the rains enrich the streams,
> As towards the line he goes, or thence returns,
> More felt is each *Æ*olian messenger,
> Warming the more with every lengthening day
> What time towards burning Cancer he remounts.
> And equal to this heat, this cold, this zeal
> Are these my tears, my sighs, the ardour that I feel.
> My constant sighs, my never waning flames
> Are only equal to my tears.
> My floods and flames howe'er intense they be,
> Are never more so than my sighs;
> I burn with fervid heat,
> And, firmly fixed, I ever sigh and weep.

CIC. This does not so much declare the meaning of the coat of arms, as the preceding discourse did, but it rather supplements or accompanies that discourse.

TANS. Say, rather, that the figure is latent in the first part, and the legend is well explained in the second; as both the one and the other are very properly signified in the type of the sun and of the earth.

CIC. Pass on to the third.

III.

TANS. The third bears on his shield a naked child, stretched upon the green turf, who rests his head upon his arm, with his eyes turned towards the sky to certain edifices, towers, gardens, and orchards, which are above the clouds, and there is

a castle of which the material is fire, and in the middle is the sign inscribed: "Mutuo fulcimur."

CIC. What does that mean?

TANS. It means that enthusiast, signified by the naked child as simple, pure, and exposed to all the accidents of Nature and of fortune, who at the same time by the force of thought, constructs castles in the air, and amongst other things a tower, of which the architect is Love, the material is the amorous fire, and the builder is himself, who says: "Mutuo fulcimur"—that is, I build and uphold you there with my thought, and you uphold me here with hope; you would not be in existence were it not for the imagination and the thought with which I form and uphold you, and I should not be alive were it not for the refreshment and comfort that I receive through your means.

CIC. It is true that there is no fancy so vain and so chimerical that may not be a more real and true medicine for an enthusiastic heart than any herb, mineral, oil, or other sort of thing that Nature produces.

TANS. Magicians can do more by means of faith than physicians by the truth; and in the worst diseases the patients benefit more by believing this or that which the former say, than in understanding that which the latter do. Now let the rhymes be read.

27.

Above the clouds in that high place,
When oft with dreaming I am fired,
For comfort and refreshment of my soul
An airy castle from my fires I build,
And if my adverse fate incline awhile,
And without scorn or ire will understand
This lofty grace for which I die,
Oh happy then my pains, happy my death.
The ardour of those flames she does not feel,
Nor is she hindered by those snares
With which, oh boy! thou'rt wont to enslave
And lead into captivity both men and gods;
By pity's hand alone, oh Love,
By showing all my woe, thou shalt prevail.

CIC. He shows that which feeds his fancy and bathes his spirit; yet, inasmuch as he is without courage to explain himself and make known his sufferings, although he is so deeply subjected to that anguish, if it should happen that his hard, uncompromising fate should bend a little (as, in the end, fate must soothe him, by showing itself without scorn or anger for the high object), he would consider no happiness so great, no life so blessed, as in such a case would be his happiness in his woes, and his blessedness in his death.

TANS. And with this he comes to declare to Love that the means by which he will gain access to that breast, is not in the ordinary way by the arms with which he usually captivates men and gods, but only by causing the fiery heart and his troubled spirit, to be laid bare, to obtain sight of which it is necessary that compassion open the way, and introduce him to that secret chamber.

IV.

CIC. What is the meaning of that butterfly which flutters round the flame, and almost burns itself? and what means that legend, "Hostis non hostis?"

TANS. The meaning of the butterfly is not difficult, which, seduced by the fascinations of splendour, goes innocently and amicably to meet its death in the devouring flames. Thus, "hostis" stands written for the effect of the fire; "non hostis" for the inclination of the fly. "Hostis," the fly passively; "non hostis," actively. "Hostis," the flame, through its ardour; "non hostis," through its splendour.

CIC. Now what is that which is written on the tablet?

TANS.:

28.

> Be it far from me to make complaint of love,
> Love, without whom I will not happy be,
> And though through him these weary toils I bear.
> Yet what is given my will shall not reject.
> Be clear the sky or dark, burning or cold,
> To that one ph[oe]nix e'er the same I'll be,
> No fate nor destiny can e'er untie
> That knot which death unable is to loose;
> To heart, to spirit, and to soul,

No pleasure is, no liberty, no life,
No smile, no rapture, no delight,
So sweet, so grateful, so divine,
As these hard bonds, this death of mine,
To which by fate, by will, by nature I incline.

Here, in the figure, he shows the resemblance between the enthusiast and the butterfly attracted towards the light; in the sonnet, however, he demonstrates rather difference and dissimilarity; as it is commonly believed, that if the butterfly foresaw its destruction, it would fly from the light more eagerly than it now pursues it, and would consider it an evil to lose its life through being absorbed into that hostile fire. But to him (the enthusiast) it is no less pleasing to perish in the flames of amorous ardour than to be drawn to the contemplation of the beauty of that rare splendour, under which, by natural inclination, by voluntary election, and by disposition of fate, he labours, serves, and dies more gaily, more resolutely, and more courageously than under whatsoever other pleasure which may offer itself to the heart, liberty which may be conceded to the spirit, and life which may be discovered in the soul.

CIC. Tell me why he says, "ever the same I'll be?"

TANS. Because it seems suitable to bring forward a reason for his constancy, seeing that the sage does not change with the moon, although the fool does so. Thus he is unique, as the ph[oe]nix is unique.

V.

CIC. But what signifies that branch of palm, around which is the legend, "Cæsar adest?"

TANS. Without further talk, all may be understood by that which is written on the tablet:

29.

Unconquered victor of Pharsalia,
Though all thy warriors be well-nigh spent,
At sight of thee they rise once more;
Their strength returns, they conquer their proud foes;
So does my love—that equals love of heaven—
Become a living presence through my thoughts;

Thoughts that my haughty soul had killed with scorn,
Love brings again stronger than love himself;
Thy presence is enough, oh memory!
These to reanimate in all their strength,
And with imperious sov'reignty they rule
And govern each opposing force.
May I be happy in this governance
And with these bonds, and may that light ne'er cease.

There are times when the inferior powers of the soul—like a vigorous and hostile army, which finds itself in its own country practised, expert, and ready—revolt against the foreign adversary, who comes down from the height of the intelligence to curb the people of the valley and of the boggy plains, where, through the baneful presence of the enemies and of such obstacles as deep ditches, advancing they lose themselves, and would be entirely lost, if there were not a certain conversion towards the splendour of intellectual things through the act of contemplation, by means of which they are converted from inferior degrees to superior ones.

CIC. What degrees are these?

TANS. The degrees of contemplation are like the degrees of light, which exist not at all in the darkness, slightly in shade, more in colours, according to their orders, from one opposite which is black to the other which is white; but more fully do they exist in the splendour diffused over pure transparent bodies, as in a looking-glass and in the moon, and still more brightly in the rays diffused by the sun, but principally and most brilliantly in the sun itself. Now the perceptive and the affectional powers are ordered in this way; the next following always has affinity for the next preceding, and by means of conversion to that which elevates it, it becomes fortified against the inferior, which lowers it; as the reason, through its conversion to the intellect, is not seduced or vanquished by knowledge or comprehension or by passionate affection, but rather, according to the law of the intellect, it is brought to govern and correct the same. It comes to this, therefore, that when the rational appetite strives against sensual concupiscence, if, by the act of conversion, the intellectual light is presented to the eyes, it causes the above appetite to take up again the lost virtue, and giving fresh strength to the nerves, it alarms and puts to rout the enemy.

CIC. In what manner do you mean that such a conversion takes place?

TANS. With three preparatives, which are noted by the contemplative Plotinus in the book of "Intellectual Beauty;" and, of these, the first is by proposing to conform himself to a divine pattern, diverting the sight from things which stand between him and his own perfection, and which are common to those things which are equal and inferior. The second is by applying himself, with full intention and attention, to superior things. The third is by bringing into captivity to God the whole will and affection: for from this it comes to pass that, without doubt, the divinity will influence him; who is everywhere present, and ready to come to the aid of whosoever turns to Him through the act of the intelligence, and who unreservedly presents himself with the affection of the will.

CIC. It is not then corporeal beauty which can allure such an one?

TANS. No, certes; because in that there is no true nor constant beauty, and for this reason it cannot evoke true nor constant love. That beauty, which is seen in bodies is accidental and transitory, and is like those which are absorbed, changed, and spoiled by the changing of the subject, which very often, from being beautiful, becomes ugly, without any change taking place in the soul. The reason then comprehends the truest beauty, through conversion, to that which makes the beauty of the body, and forms it in loveliness—it is the soul which has thus built and designed it. Now does the intellect rise still higher, and learns that the soul is incomparably more beautiful than any beauty that may be in bodies; but yet it cannot persuade itself that it is beautiful of itself and primarily, for if it be so, what is the cause of that difference which exists in the quality of souls, by which some are wise, amiable, and beautiful, others stupid, odious, and ugly. We must then raise ourselves to that superior intellect which is beautiful in itself and good in itself. This is that sole supreme captain who alone, placed before the eyes of the militant thoughts, enlivens, encourages, strengthens them, and renders them victorious above the scorn of every other beauty and the repudiation of every other good whatsoever. This is the presence which causes every difficulty to be overcome and all opposition to be subdued.

CIC. I understand it all; but what is the meaning of, "May I be happy in this governance and with these bonds, and may that light not cease?"

TANS. He means, and he proves, that every sort of love, the greater its dominion and the surer its hold, the more tight are the bonds, and the more firm the yoke, and the more ardent the flames that are felt, as compared with the ordinary princes and tyrants, who adopt a greater rigour wherever they see they have less hold.

CIC. Go on.

VI.

TANS. Here we see described the idea of a flying ph[oe]nix, towards which is turned a boy who is burning in the midst of flames; and there is the legend, "Fata obstant." But in order better to understand it, let us read the tablet:

30.

Sole bird of the sun, thou wandering ph[oe]nix!
That measurest thy days as does the world
With lofty summits of Arabia Felix.
Thou art the same thou wast, but I what I was not:
I through the fire of love, unhappy die;
But thee the sun with his warm rays revives;
Thou burn'st in one, and I, in every place;
Eros my fire, while thine Apollo gives.
Predestined is the term of thy long life;
Short span is mine,
And menaced by a thousand ills.
Nor do I know how I have lived, nor how shall live,
Me does blind fate conduct;
But thou wilt come again, again behold thy light.

From the meaning of these lines, you will see that in the figure is drawn the comparison between the fate of the ph[oe]nix and that of the enthusiast; and the legend, "Fata obstant," does not signify that the fates are adverse either to the boy, or to the ph[oe]nix, or to both; but that the fatal decrees for each are not the same, but are diverse and opposite. The ph[oe]nix is that which it was, because the same matter, by means of the fire, renews itself, and becomes again the body of the ph[oe]nix, and the same spirit and soul come to inhabit it. The enthusiast is that which he was not, because the subject, which is a man, was first of some other species, according to innumerable differentiations. So that what the ph[oe]nix was, is known, and what it will be, is known; but this subject cannot return, except through many and uncertain means, to invest the same or a similar natural form. Then the ph[oe]nix, through the sun's presence, changes death into life, and that other, by the presence of love, transmutes life into death. The one kindles his fire on the aromatic altar, the other finds it ever present with him and carries it wherever he goes. The one again, has certain conditions of a long life; but the other, through the infinite differences of time and innumerable circumstances, has the mutable conditions of a short life. The one kindles with certainty, the other with doubt as to whether he will see the sun again.

CIC. What do you think that this means?

TANS. It means the difference that exists between the lower intellect called the intellect of power, either possible or passive, which is uncertain, multifarious, and multiform, and the higher intellect, which, perhaps, is like that which is said

by the Peripatetics to be the lowest of the intelligences, and which exerts an immediate influence over all the individuals of the human species, and is called the active and acting intellect. This special human intelligence which influences all individuals is like the moon, which partakes of no other species but that one alone which always renews itself by the transmutation caused in it by the sun, which is the primal and universal intelligence; but the human intellect, both individual and collective, turns as do the eyes towards innumerable and most diverse objects; whence, according to the infinite degrees which exist, it takes on all the natural forms. Hence it is that this particular intellect may be as enthusiastic, vague, and uncertain, as that universal one is quiet, fixed, and certain, whether as regards the desire or the comprehension. Now therefore, as you may very well perceive for yourself, it means that the nature of the comprehension of sense and its varied appetite, is vague, inconstant, and uncertain, and the conception and definite appetite of the intelligence is firm and stable. This is the difference between sensual love, which has no stability nor discretion as to its object, and intellectual love, which aims only at one, sure and fixed, towards which it turns, through which it is illuminated in its conception, by which, being kindled in its affections, it becomes inflamed and brightened, and is maintained in unity and identity of condition.

VII.

CIC. But what is the meaning of that figure of the sun, with a circle inside and another outside, with the legend "Circuit."

TANS. The meaning of this I am certain I should never have understood if I had not heard it from the designer of it himself. Now you must know that "Circuit" has reference to the movement the sun makes round the circle which is drawn inside and outside, in order to signify that the movement both makes and is made; and hence, as a consequence, the sun is to be found in every part of those circles; so that, if he moves and is moved, and is over the whole circumference of the circle equally, then you find in him both movement and rest.

CIC. This I understood in the dialogues on the infinite universe and the innumerable worlds, where it is declared that the divine wisdom is extremely mobile, as Solomon said, and also that the same is most stable, as all those declare who know. Now go on and make me understand the proposition.

TANS. It means that [A]his sun is not like this one, which is commonly believed to go round the earth with the daily movement in twenty-four hours, and with the

planetary movement in twelve months, and by which he causes the four seasons of the year to be felt, according as he is found to be in the four cardinal points of the zodiac; but he is such an one, that, being the ethereal eternity itself, and consequently an entire and complete totality, he contains the winter, the spring, the summer, the autumn, together with the day and the night, for he is all and for all, in all points and places.

[A] Il suo sole.

CIC. Now apply that which you have said to the figure.

TANS. It being impossible here to design the entire sun in every point of the circle, two circles are delineated; one which contains the sun to signify that the movement is made through him, the other which is contained by the sun to show that he is moved by it.

CIC. But this explanation is not very clear and appropriate.

TANS. Suffice it that it is the clearest and most appropriate that he was able to make. If you can make a better one, you shall have permission to remove this one and put it in its place, for this has only been put in, so that the soul should not be without a body.

CIC. What do you say about that "Circuit?"

TANS. That legend contains all the meaning of the thing in so far as it can be explained, for it means that he turns and is turned, that is to say movement present and accomplished.

CIC. Excellent! And therefore those circles which so ill explain the circumstance of movement and rest, we can say are placed there to signify the circulation only. Thus am I satisfied with the subject and with the form of the heroic device. Now read the lines.

TANS.:

31.

> Mild are thy rays, oh, Sol! from Taurus sent,
> And from the Lion thy beams mature and burn,
> And when thy light from pungent Scorpion darts
> Transcendent is the ardour of thy flames.

From fierce Deucalion all is struck with cold,
Stiffened the lakes and locked the running streams.
With spring, with summer, autumn, and with winter,
I warm, I kindle, burn and blaze for ever.
So ardent my desire,
The object so supreme for which I burn;
Glowing and unencumbered I behold,
And make my lightnings flash unto the stars.
No moment can I count in all the year
To change the[A] inexorable cross I bear.

Here observe that the four seasons of the year are signified, not by four movable signs, which are Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn, but by the four which are called fixed—namely, Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius, to signify the condition, fervour, and perfection of those seasons. Note further, that in virtue of those apostrophes, which are in the eighth line, you can read: I warm, kindle, burn, blaze; or, be thou warmed, kindled, burning, blazing; or, let him warm, kindle, burn, blaze.

[A] Sordi affanni.

You have farther to consider that these are not four synonyms, but four different terms, which signify so many degrees of the effects of the fire, which first warms, secondly kindles, thirdly burns, and fourthly blazes or inflames that which it has warmed, kindled, and burnt. And thus are denoted in the enthusiast, desire, attention, study, affection, in which he never for a moment feels any change.

CIC. Why does he put them under the title of a cross?

TANS. Because the object, which is the divine light, is, in this life, more felt as a painful longing than in quiet fruition, because our mind is towards that, as the eyes of night birds to the sun.

CIC. Proceed; for from what you have said I understand all.

VIII.

TANS. On the next crest there is painted a full moon and the legend: "Talis mihi semper ut astro," which means that to the star—that is, to the sun—she is ever such as she here shows herself, full and clear in the entire circumference of the

circle, which, in order that you may better understand, I will let you hear that which is written on the tablet.

32.

> Oh, changeful moon, inconstant moon!
> With horns now full, now void, thou wanderest.
> Mounting, thy sphere now white now dark appears.
> The mountains and the valleys of the north thou brightenest,
> And turning by thy dust-encumbered steps,
> Thou lightest in the south the Lybian heights.
> My moon for my continual pain.
> Is constant ever, ever full.
> So is my star,
> Which ever from me takes and nothing gives,
> For ever burns and ever shines,
> Cruel always yet always beautiful.
> This noble light of mine
> Torments me still and still delights me.

It seems to me, that it means that his particular intelligence is to the universal intelligence ever the same—that is to say, the one is ever illuminated by the other, over the whole hemisphere; notwithstanding that to the inferior powers, and according to the influence of his actions, it appears now dark, and now more and less clear. Or perhaps it means that his speculative intellect, which is ever invariable in its action, is always turned and affected towards the human intelligence signified by the moon. Because, as this is said to be the lowest of all the stars, and is nearest to us, so the illuminating intelligence of all of us in this state is the last in order of the other intelligences, as Averroes and the more subtle Peripatetics say. That intelligence, in so far as it is not in any act, goes down before, or sets to the potential intellect, or as if so to say, it emerged from the bottom of the occult hemisphere, and showed itself now void, now full, according as it gives more or less light of intelligence. Now its sphere is dark, now light, because sometimes it shows itself as a shadow, a semblance, and a vestige, and sometimes more and more openly: now it declines towards the south, now it mounts towards the north—that is, now it removes farther and farther away, and now it approaches nearer and nearer. But the intellect, active with its continual grief—seeing that it is not through its human condition and nature that it finds itself so wretched, so opposed, courted, solicited, distracted,

and, as it were, torn by the inferior powers—sees its object stable, fixed and constant, and ever full, and in the same splendour of beauty. Thus it ever takes away, in so far as it does not concede, and ever gives, in so far as it concedes. It ever burns in the affection in so far as it shines in thoughts, and is always cruel in withdrawing itself through that which withdraws itself; as it is always beautiful in communication with that to which it presents itself. Always does it torment when it is divided from him by difference of locality, as always it delights him being joined to it by affection.

CIC. Now apply your intelligence to the legend.

TANS. He says then, "talis mihi semper;" that is, because of the continual application of my intellect, my memory, and my will, because I will remember, understand and desire no other; she is ever the same to me, and in so far as I can understand her, she is entirely present, and is not separated from me by any distraction of my thoughts, nor does she become darkened to me through any want of attention, for there is no thought that can divert me from that light nor any necessity of nature which forces me to a less constant attention; "talis mihi semper" on her side, because she is invariable in substance, in virtue, in beauty, and in effect, towards those things that are constant and invariable towards her. She says further, "ut astro," because in respect of the sun, the illuminator of her, she is ever equally luminous, seeing that she is ever turned equally towards him, and he at the same time diffuses his rays equally. As, physically, this moon that we see with the eyes, although towards the earth she appears now dark, now shining, now more, now less illuminated and illuminating, yet is she ever equally irradiated by the sun, because she always reflects his rays over at least the whole of her hemisphere. So also is the hemisphere of this earth ever equally irradiated, although from the watery surfaces she from time to time sends her splendours unequally to the moon,—which like innumerable other stars we consider as another earth—in the same manner, she also sends hers to the earth, on account of the periodical changes which both experience in finding themselves now the one, now the other, nearer to the sun.

CIC. How can this intelligence be signified by the moon which lights up the hemisphere?

TANS. All the intelligences are signified by the moon, in so far as they are sharers in act and in power, in so far as they have the light materially and by participation, receiving it from another; I say that, as not being lights of themselves, nor by their own nature, but by reflection from the sun, which is the

first intelligence, which is pure and absolute light, as it is also pure and absolute action.

CIC. All those things, then, that are dependent, and are not the first act and cause, are they composed of light and shade, of matter and form, of power and action?

TANS. It is so. Furthermore this soul of ours, in all its substance, is signified by the moon which shines through the hemisphere of the superior powers, by which it is turned towards the light of the intelligible world, and is dark through the inferior powers, by which it is occupied with material things.

IX.

CIC. It seems to me that what has just been said has some connection and analogy with the impression that I see on the next shield, where stands a gnarled and rugged oak, against which the wind is raging, and it is circumscribed by the legend, "ut robori robur," and here is the tablet, which says:

33.

> Old oak, that spread'st thy branches to the air,
> And firmly in the earth dost fix thy roots;
> No shifting of the land, no mighty elements,
> Which Heaven from the stormy north unlocks;
> Nor whatso'er the gruesome winter sends,
> Can tear thee from the spot where thou art chained.
> Thou art the veritable portrait of my faith,
> Which, fixed, remains 'gainst every casual chance.
> Ever the self-same ground dost thou
> Grasp, cultivate and comprehend; and stretch
> Thy grateful roots unto the generous breast.
> Upon one only object I
> Have fixed my spirit, sense, and intellect.

TANS. The legend is clear, by which the enthusiast boasts of having the strength and vigour of the oak, and as before said of being ever the same in respect to the one only ph[oe]nix, and in the next preceding one, conforming himself to that moon which ever shines so brightly and is so beautiful, and also in that he does not resemble this antichthon between our earth and the sun in so far as it changes to our eyes, but in that it ever receives within itself an equal amount of the solar splendour, and through this remains constant and firm against the rough winds

and tempests of winter, through the stability that he has in his star, in which he is planted by affection and intention, as the roots of the oak twist and weave themselves into the veins of the earth.

CIC. I hold it better worth living in quiet and without vexation than to be forced to endure so much.

TANS. That is a maxim of the Epicureans which, being well understood, would not be considered so unworthy as the ignorant hold it to be, seeing that it does not detract from what I have called virtue, nor does it impair the perfection of firmness, but it rather adds to that perfection as it is understood by the vulgar, for Epicurus does not hold that, a true and complete strength and firmness which feels and bears inconveniences, but that which bears them and feels them not. He does not consider him perfect in divine heroic love, who feels the spur, the check, or remorse or trouble about other love; but him who has no feeling of other affections; so that being fixed in one pleasure, there is no displeasure that has any power to jostle him or dislodge him from his place. And this it is to touch the highest blessedness of this state, to have rapture and no sense of pain.

CIC. The ignorant do not believe in this meaning of Epicurus.

TANS. Because they neither read his own books, nor those that report his maxims without invidiousness, but there are those who read the course of his life and the conditions of his death, where with these words he dictated the beginning of his testament: "Being in the last, and at the same time, the happiest day of our life, we have ordained this with a healthy, tranquil mind at rest; for whatever acute sorrow may torment us from one side, that torment is entirely annulled by the pleasure of our own inventions and the consideration of our end." And it is manifest that he no longer felt more pleasure than sorrow in eating, drinking, repose, and in generating, but in not feeling hunger, nor thirst, nor fatigue, nor sensuality. From this may be understood what is according to us the perfection of firmness; not in this, that the tree neither bends nor breaks, nor is rent, but in that it does not so much as stir, and its prototype keeps spirit, sense, and intellect, fixed there, where the shock of the tempest is not felt.

CIC. Do you then think it is a thing to be desired, to bear shocks in order to prove that you are strong?

TANS. You say "to bear;" and this is a part of firmness, but it is not the whole of that virtue, which consists in bearing strongly, as I say, or in not feeling, as Epicurus said. Now this loss of feeling is caused by being entirely absorbed in

the cultivation of virtue, or of real good and felicity, in such wise that Regulus did not feel the chest, Lucretia the dagger, Socrates the poison, Anaxagoras the mortar, Scævola the fire, Cocles the abyss, and other worthies felt not those things which would torment and fill with terror the vulgar crowd.

CIC. Now pass on.

X.

TANS. Look at this other who bears the device of an anvil and a hammer, round which is the legend "ab Aetna!" But here Vulcan is introduced:

34.

> Not now to my Sicilian mount I turn,
> Where thou dost forge the thunderbolts of Jove,
> Here, rugged Vulcan will I stay;
> Here, where a prouder giant moves,
> Who burns and rages against Heaven in vain,
> Soliciting new cares and divers trials.
> Here is a better smith and Mongibello[A]
> A better anvil, better forge and hammer;
> For here behold a bosom full of sighs,
> Which blows the furnace and the fire revives.
> The soul nor yields nor bends to these rough blows,
> But bears exulting this long martyrdom,
> And makes a harmony from these sharp pangs.

[A] Mount Etna.

Here are shown the pains and troubles which beset love, principally love of a low kind, which is no other than the forge of Vulcan, that smith who makes the bolts of Jove which torment offending souls. For ill-ordered love has in itself the beginning of its own pain, seeing that there is a God near us, in us, and with us. There is in us a certain sacred mind and intelligence, which supplies an affection of its own, which has its own avenger, which, through remorse for certain shortcomings, flagellates the transgressing spirit as with a hammer. It notes our actions and our affections, and as it is treated by us, so are we treated by it. In every lover I say there is this smith Vulcan, and as there is no man that has not a god within him, so there is no lover that has not a god within him, and no lover within whom this god is not. Most certainly there is a god in every man, but

what god it is in each one is not so easy to know. And even though we should examine and distinguish, yet do I believe that none other than Love could declare it, he being the one who pulls the oars, and fills the sails, and modifies this compound, so that it comes to be well or ill affected. I say well or ill affected as to that which it puts in execution through the moral actions and through contemplation; for the rest, all lovers are apt to experience some difficulties, things being as they are, so entangled; there being no good whatever, either of conception or of the affections, which is not joined to or stands in opposition to evil, as there is no truth which is not joined or opposed to what is false, so there is no love without fear, ardour, jealousy, rancour, and other passions, which proceed from their opposites, and which disturb us, as the other opposite causes satisfaction. Thus the soul striving to recover its natural beauty seeks to purify itself, to heal itself, and to reform itself, and to this end it uses fire, because, being like gold, mixed with earth and crude, with a certain rigour it tries to liberate itself from defilement, and this result is obtained when the intellect, the real smith of Jove, puts itself to the work and causes an active exercise of the intellectual powers.

CIC. It seems to me that this is referred to in the "Banquet" of Plato, where it says that Love has inherited from his mother, Poverty, that dried-up, thin, pale, bare-footed, and submissive condition without a home, without anything, and through these is signified the torture of the soul that is torn with contrary affections.

TANS. So it is; because the spirit, full of this enthusiasm, becomes absorbed in profound thoughts, stricken with urgent cares, kindled with fervent desires, excited by frequent crises: whence the soul, finding itself in suspense, becomes less diligent and active in the government of the body through the acts of the vegetative power; thus the body becomes lean, ill-nourished, attenuated, poor in blood, and rich in melancholy humours, and these, if they do not administer to the disciplined soul, or to a clear and lucid spirit, may lead to insanity, folly, and brutal fury, or at least to a certain disregard of self, and a contempt of its own being, which is symbolized by Plato in the bare feet. Love becomes subjected and flies suddenly down to earth when it is attached to low things, but flies high when it is fixed upon more worthy enterprises. In conclusion, whatever love it may be, it is ever afflicted and tormented in such a way that it cannot fail to supply material for the forge of Vulcan; because the soul, being a divine thing, and by nature, not a servant but the mistress of corporeal matter, she becomes troubled in that she voluntarily serves the body wherein she finds nothing to satisfy her, and albeit, fixed in the thing loved, yet now and then she becomes

agitated, and fluctuates amidst the waves of hope, fear, doubt, ardour, conscience, remorse, determination, repentance, and other scourges, which are the bellows, the coals, the forge, the hammer, the pincers, and other instruments which are found in the workshop of the sordid grimy consort of Venus.

CIC. Enough has been said upon this subject. Let us see what follows.

XI.

TANS. Here is a golden apple, rich with various kinds of precious enamel, and there is a legend about it which says, "Pulchriori detur."

CIC. The allusion to the fact of the three goddesses who submitted themselves to the judgment of Paris is very common. But read the lines which more specifically disclose the meaning of the present enthusiast.

TANS.:

35.

> Venus, the goddess of the third heaven
> (Mother of the archer blind, who conquers all),
> She whose father is the head of Zeus,
> And Juno, most majestic wife of Jove,
> These call the Trojan shepherd to be judge,
> And to the fairest give the ruddy sphere.
> Compared with Venus, Pallas, and the Queen of Heaven,
> My perfect goddess bears away the palm.
> The Cyprian queen may boast her royal limbs,
> Minerva charm with her transcendent wit,
> And Juno with a majesty supreme;
> But she who holds my heart all these excels
> In wisdom, majesty, and loveliness.

Here he makes a comparison between his object (or ideal) which comprises all circumstances, all conditions, and all kinds of beauty, in one subject, and others which exhibit each only one, and that through various hypotheses, as with corporeal beauty, all the conditions of which Apelles could not find in one, but in many virgins. Now here, where there are three kinds of the beautiful, although it seems that all of these exist in each of the three goddesses—Venus not being found wanting in wisdom and majesty, Juno not lacking loveliness and wisdom,

and Pallas being full of majesty and beauty, in each case it is a fact that one quality exceeds the others, so that it comes to be held as distinctive of the one, and the other as incidental to all, seeing that of those three gifts, one predominates in each and proclaims her sovereign over the others. And the cause of this difference lies in the fact of possessing these qualities, not primarily and in their essence, but by participation and derivation; as in all things which are dependent, their perfection depends upon the degrees of major and minor and more and less. But in the simplicity of the divine essence, all exists in totality, and not according to any measure, and therefore wisdom is not greater than beauty and majesty, and goodness is not greater than strength: not only are till the attributes equal, they are one and the same thing. As in the sphere all the dimensions are not only equal, the length being equal to the depth and breadth, but are also identical, seeing that what in a sphere is called deep, may also be called long and wide. Likewise is it, as to height in divine wisdom, which is the same as the depth of power and the breadth of goodness. All these perfections are equal, because they are infinite. Of necessity, one is according to the sum of the other, seeing that where things are finite it may result in this, that it is more wise than beautiful or good, more good and beautiful than wise, more wise and good than powerful, and more powerful than good or wise. But where there is infinite wisdom there cannot be other than infinite power, otherwise there would be no infinite knowledge. Where there is infinite goodness there must be infinite wisdom, otherwise there would be no infinite goodness. Where there is infinite power there must be infinite goodness and wisdom, because there is the being able to know and the knowing to be able. Now, observe how the object of this enthusiast, who is, as it were, inebriated with the drink of the gods, is incomparably higher than others which are different. I mean to say that the divine essence comprehends in the very highest degree perfection of all kinds, so that according to the degree in which this particular form may have participated, he can understand all, do all, and be such an attached friend to one that he may come to feel contempt and indifference towards every other beauty. Therefore to her should be consecrated the spherical apple as to her who seems to be all in all; not to Venus, who is beautiful but is surpassed in wisdom by Minerva, and by Juno in majesty; not to Pallas than whom Venus is more beautiful, and the other more magnificent; not to Juno, who is not the goddess of intelligence or of love.

CIC. Truly, as are the degrees of Nature and of the essences, so in proportion are the degrees of the intelligible orders and the glories of the amorous affections and enthusiasms.

XII.

CIC. The following bears a head with four faces, which blow towards the four corners of the heavens, and are four winds in one subject; above these stand two stars, and in the centre the legend "Novae ortae aeoliae." I would like to know what that signifies.

TANS. I think that the meaning of this device is consequent upon that which precedes it, for, as there the object is declared to be infinite beauty, so here is proposed what may be called a similar aspiration, study, affection, and desire. I believe that these winds are set to signify sighs; but this we shall see when we come to read the lines:

36.

> Sons of the Titan Astræus and Aurora,
> Who trouble heaven, earth, and the wide sea,
> Leave now this stormy war of elements,
> And fight anon with the high gods.
> No more in my *Æ*olian caves ye dwell,
> No more does my restraining power compel;
> But caught are ye and closed within that breast,
> With moans and sobs and bitter sighs opprest.
> Turbulent brothers of the stars,
> Companions of the tempests of the seas,
> Those lights are all that may avail
> Peace to restore; murderous yet innocent;
> Which, open or concealed,
> Will bless with calm, or curse with pride.

Evidently, here, *Æ*olus is introduced as speaking to the winds, which he declares are no longer tempered by him in the *Æ*olian caverns, but by two stars in the breast of this enthusiast. Here, the two stars do not mean the two eyes which are in the forehead, but the two appreciable kinds of divine beauty and goodness, of that infinite splendour, which so influences intellectual and rational desire, that it brings him to a condition of infinite aspiration, according to the way and the degree with which he comes to comprehend that glorious light. For love, while it is finite, contented, and fixed in a certain measure, is not in the form of the species of divine beauty, but as it goes on with ever higher aspirations, it may be said to verge towards the infinite.

CIC.. How is breathing made to mean aspiring? What relation has desire with the winds?

TANS. Whosoever in this present condition aspires, also sighs, and the same breathes; and therefore the vehemence of the aspiration is noted by the hieroglyph of strong breathing.

CIC. But there is a difference between sighing and breathing.

TANS. Therefore it is not put as if one stood for the other, or as being identical, but as being similar.

CIC. Go on then with our proposition.

TANS. The infinite aspiration then, indicated by the sighs and symbolized by the winds, is not under the dominion of Æolus in the Æolic caverns, but of the aforementioned two lights, which are not only blameless, but benevolent in killing the enthusiast, inasmuch as they cause him to die to every other thing, except the absorbing affection; at the same time, they, being closed and concealed, render him unquiet, and being open, they will tranquillize him, because at this time, when the eyes of the human mind in this body are covered with a nebulous veil, the soul, through such studies, becomes troubled and harassed, and he being thus torn and goaded, will attain only that amount of quiet as will satisfy the condition of his nature.

CIC.. How can our finite intellect follow after the infinite ideal?

TANS. Through the infinite potency it possesses.

CIC. This would be useless, if ever it came into effect.

TANS. It would be useless, if it had to do with a finite action, where infinite potency would be wanting, but not with the infinite action where infinite potency is positive perfection.

CIC. If the human intellect is finite in nature and in act, how can it have an infinite potency?

TANS. Because it is eternal, and in this ever has delight, so that it enjoys happiness without end or measure; and because, as it is finite in itself, so it may be infinite in the object.

CIC. What difference is there between the infinity of the object and the infinity of

the potentiality?

TANS. This is finitely infinite, and that infinitely infinite. But to return to ourselves. The legend there says: "Novæ Liparææ æoliæ," because it seems as if we are to believe that all the winds which are in the abysmal caverns of Æolus were converted into sighs, if we include those which proceed from the affection, which aspires continually to the highest good and to the infinite beauty.

XIII.

CIC. Here we see the signification of that burning light around which is written: "Ad vitam, non ad horam."

TANS. Persistence in such a love and ardent desire of true goodness, by which in this temporal state the enthusiast is consumed. This, I think, is shown in the following tablet:

37.

> [A]What time the day removes the orient vault,
> The rustic peasant leaves his humble home,
> And when the sun with fiercer tangent strikes,
> Fatigued and parched, he sits him in the shade;
> Then plods again with hard, laborious toil,
> Until black night the hemisphere enshrouds.
> And then he rests. But I must ever chafe
> At morning, noon-day, evening, and at night.
> These fiery rays
> Which stream from those two arches of my sun,
> Ne'er fade from the horizon of my soul.
> So wills my fate;
> But blazing every hour
> From their meridian they burn the afflicted heart.

[A] Quando il sen d'oriente il giorno sgombra.

CIC. This tablet expresses with greater truth than perspicacity the sense of the figure.

TANS.. It is not necessary for me to make any effort to point out to you the appropriateness, as it only requires a little attentive consideration. The rays of

the sun are the ways in which the divine beauty and goodness manifest themselves to us; and they are fiery because they cannot be comprehended by the intellect without at the same time kindling the affections. The two arches of the sun are the two kinds of revelation, that scholastic theologians call early and late, whence our illuminating intelligence, as an airy medium, deduces that species, either in virtue, which it contemplates in itself, or in efficacy, which it beholds in its effects. The horizon of the soul, in this place, is that part of the superior potentialities where the vigorous impulse of the affection comes to aid the lively comprehension of the intellect, being signified by the heart, which, burning at all hours, torments itself; because all those fruits of love that we can gather in this state are not so sweet that they have not united with them a certain affliction, which proceeds from the fear of imperfect fruition: as especially occurs in the fruits of natural affection, the condition of which I cannot do better than explain in the words of the Epicurean poet:

> Ex hominis vera facie, pulchroque colore
> Nil datur in corpus præter simulacra fruendum
> Tenuia, quæ vento spes captat sæpe misella.
> Ut bibere in somnis sitiens cum quærit, et humor
> Non datur, ardorem in membris qui stinguere possit,
> Sed laticum simulacra petit, frustraque laborat,
> In medioque sitit torrenti flumine potans:
> Sic in amore Venus simulacris ludit amantis,
> Nec satiare queunt spectando corpora coram,
> Nec manibus quicquam teneris abradere membris
> Possunt, errantes incerti corpore toto.
> Denique cum membris conlatis flore fruuntur
> Ætatis, dum jam præsagit gaudia corpus,
> Atque in eo est Venus, ut muliebria conserat arva,
> Adfigunt avide corpus, iunguntque salivas
> Oris, et inspirant pressantes dentibus ora,
> Necquiquam, quoniam nihil inde abradere possunt,
> Nec penetrare, et abire in corpus corpore toto.

In the same way, he judges as to the kind of taste that we can have of divine things, which, while we force ourselves to penetrate, and unite with them, we find that we have more pain in the desire than pleasure in the realization. And this may have been the reason why that wise Hebrew said that he who increases knowledge increases pain; because from, the greater comprehension grows the

greater desire. And this is followed by greater vexation and grief for the deprivation of the thing desired. So the Epicurean, who led a most tranquil life, said opportunely:

> Sed fugitare decet simulacra, et pabula amoris
> Abstergere sibi, atque alio convertere mentem,
> Nec servare sibi curam certumque dolorem:
> Ulcus enim virescit, et inveterascit alendo,
> Inque dies gliscit furor, atque ærumna gravescit.
> Nec Veneris fructu caret is, qui vitat amorem,
> Sed potius, quæ sunt, sine poena, commoda sumit.

CIC. What is meant by the meridian of the heart?

TANS. That part or region of the will which is highest and most exalted, and where it becomes most strongly, clearly, and effectually kindled. He means that such affection is not as in its beginning, where it stirs, nor as at the end, where it reposes, but as in the middle, where it becomes fervid.

XIV.

CIC. But what means that glowing arrow, which has flames in place of a hard point, around which is encircled a noose with the legend: "Amor instat ut instans"? Say, what does it mean?

TANS. It seems to me to mean that love never leaves him, and at the same time eternally afflicts him.

CIC. I see the noose, the arrow, and the fire. I understand that which is written: "Amor instat"; but that which follows I cannot understand—that is, that love as an instant, or persisting, persists; which has the same poverty of idea as if one said: "This undertaking he has feigned as a feint; he bears it as he bears it, understands it as he understands it, values it as he values it, and esteems it as he who esteems it."

TANS. It is easy for him to decide and condemn who does not even consider. That "instans" is not an adjective from the verb "instare," but it is a noun substantive used for the instant of time.

CIC. Now, what is the meaning of the phrase "love endures as an instant?"

TANS.. What does Aristotle mean in his book on Time, when he says that eternity

is an instant, and that all time is no more than an instant?

CIC. How can this be, seeing that there is no time so short that it cannot be divided into seconds? Perhaps he would say that in one instant there is the Flood, the Trojan war, and we who exist now; I should like to know how this instant is divided into so many centuries and years, and whether, by the same rule, we might not say that the line is a point?

TANS. If time be one, but in different temporal subjects, so the instant is one in different and all parts of time. As I am the same I was, am, and shall be; so I myself am always the same in the house, in the temple, in the field, and wheresoever I am.

CIC. Why do you wish to make out that the instant is the whole of time?

TANS. Because if it were not an instant, it would not be time; therefore time in essence and substance is no other than an instant, and let this suffice, if you understand it, because I do not intend to perorate upon the entire physics; so that you must understand that he means to say that the whole of love is no less present than the whole of time; because this "instans" does not mean a moment of time.

CIC. This meaning must be specified in some way, if we do not wish to see the motto invalidated by equivocation, by which we are free to suppose that he meant to say that his love was but for an instant—that is, for an atom of time, and of nothing more, or that he means that it is as you interpret it, everlasting.

TANS. Surely, if these two contrary meanings were implied, the legend would be nonsense. But it is not so, if you consider well, for it cannot be that in one instant, which is an atom or point, love persists or endures; therefore one must of necessity understand the instant in another signification. And for the sake of getting out of the mesh, read the stanza:

38.

One time scatters and one gathers;
One builds, one breaks; one weeps, one laughs;
One time to sadness, one to gaiety inclines;
One labours and one rests; one stands, one sits;
One proffers and one takes away;
One stays and one removes; one animates, one kills.
In all the years, the months, the days, the hours,
Love waits on me, strikes, binds, and burns.
To me continual dissolution,
Continual weeping holds me and destroys.
All times to me are full of woe;
All things time takes from me,
And gives me naught, not even death.

CIC. I understand the meaning quite perfectly, and confess that all things agree very well. It is time to proceed to the next.

XV.

TANS. Here behold a serpent languishing in the snow, where a labourer has thrown it, and a naked child burning in the midst of the fire, with certain other details and circumstances, with the legend which says: "Idem, itidem non idem." This seems more like an enigma than anything else, and I do not feel sure that I can explain it at all; yet I do believe that it means that the same fate vexes, and the same torments both the one and the other—that is, immeasurably, without mercy and unto death, by means of various instruments or contrary principles, showing itself the same whether cold or hot. But this, it seems to me, requires longer and special consideration.

CIC. Some other time. Read the lines:

39.

Limp snake, that writhest in the snow,
Twisting and turning here and there
To find some ease from the tormenting cold,
If the congealing ice could know thy pain,
Or had the sense to feel thy smart,
And thou couldst find a voice for thy complaint,

I do believe thy argument would make it pitiful.
I with eternal fire am scourged, am burnt, and bitten,
And in the iciness of my divinity find no deliverance,
No pity does she feel, nor can she know, alas!
The rigorous ardour of my flames.

40.

Serpent, thou fain wouldst flee, but canst not;
Try for thy hiding-place, it is no more;
Recall thy strength, 'tis spent;
Wait for the sun, behind thick fog he hides;
Cry mercy of the hind, he fears thy tooth.
Fortune invoke, she hears thee not, the jade!
Nor flight, nor place, nor star, nor man, nor fate
Can bring to thee deliverance from death.
Thou dost become congealed. Melting am I.
I like thy rigours, thee my ardour pleases;
Help have I none for thee, and thou hast none for me.
Clear is our evil fate—all hope resign.

CIC. Let us go, and by the way we will seek to untie this knot—if possible.

TANS. So be it.

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THE APOLOGY OF THE NOLAN

TO THE MOST VIRTUOUS AND LOVELY LADIES.

O lovely, graceful nymphs of England!
Not in repugnance nor in scorn
Our spirit holds you,
Nor would our pen abase you
More than it must—to call you feminine!

Exemption I am sure you would not claim,
Being subject to the common influence;
Shining on earth as do the stars in heaven.
Your sov'reign beauty, ladies, our austerity
Cannot depreciate, nor would do so,
For we have not in view a superhuman kind,
Such poison,[A] therefore, far from you be set,
For here we see the one, the great Diana,
Who is to you as sun amongst the stars.
Wit, words, learning and art,
And whatsoe'er is mine of scribbling faculty,
I humbly place before you.

[A] Arsenico.

Transcribers Notes:

Page 162: Original source said 34

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